Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale.

1841.

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THE

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

OF THE

PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

INCLUDING THE

RURAL AND DOMESTIC RECREATIONS,

MAY GAMES, MUMMERIES, SHOWS, PROCESSIONS, PAGEANTS, AND POMPOUS SPECTACLES,

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY JOSEPH STRUTT.

ILLUSTRATED BY

One Hundred and Forty Engravings,

IN WHICH ARE REPRESENTED

MOST OF THE POPULAR DIVERSIONS;

SELECTED FROM ANCIENT PAINTINGS.

A NEW EDITION, WITH A COPIOUS INDEX,

BY WILLIAM HONE,

AUTHOR OF THE EVERY-DAY BOOK, TABLE BOOK, YEAR BOOK, ETC.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE are two previous editions of Mr. STRUTT'S Sports and Pastimes of the People of England. The first appeared in 1801; the second, which was published in 1810, the year wherein the author died, was an incorrect reprint, without a single additional line. Both were in quarto, and as each of the plates, with few exceptions, contained several subjects referred to in different parts of the work, and as there were no paginal references on the plates, they were frequently embarrassing to the reader.

The present edition is of a more convenient size, and at one-sixth of the price of the former editions; and every engraving is on the page it illustrates.

To a volume abounding in historical and other interesting facts, an Index seemed indispensable; and a very copious one is annexed. The *Two* former editions were without.

If Mr. STRUTT had lived, I am persuaded he would have incorporated into the body of the work some notes, which were needlessly placed on the bottom margins. I have ventured to take them up into the pages; but without any undue alteration of the author's language.

I hope, therefore, that my aim to render this edition generally desirable and available, has been fully accomplished.

W. HONE.

Newington Green, 1830.

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INTRODUCTION.

A GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE POPULAR SPORTS, PASTIMES, AND MILITARY GAMES, TOGETHER WITH THE VARIOUS SPECTACLES OF MIRTH OR SPLENDOUR, EXHIBITED PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY, FOR THE SAKE OF AMUSEMENT, AT DIFFERENT PERIODS, IN ENGLAND.

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I.—OBJECT OF THE WORK, TO DESCRIBE THE PASTIMES AND TRACE THEIR ORIGIN.

In order to form a just estimation of the character of any particular people, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the Sports and Pastimes most generally prevalent among them.

War, policy, and other contingent circumstances, may effectually place men, at different times, in different points of view, but, when we follow them into their retirements, where no disguise is necessary, we are most likely to see them in their true state, and may best judge of their natural dispositions. Unfortunately, all the information that remains respecting the ancient inhabitants of this island is derived from foreign writers partially acquainted with them as a people, and totally ignorant of their domestic customs and amusements: the silence, therefore, of the contemporary historians on these important subjects leaves us without the power of tracing them with the least degree of certainty; and as it is my intention, in the following pages, to confine myself as much as possible to positive intelligence, I shall studiously endeavour to avoid all controversial and conjectural arguments. I mean also to treat upon such pastimes only as have been practised in this country; but as many of them originated on the continent, frequent digressions, by way of illustrations, must necessarily occur: these, however, I shall make it my business to render as concise as the nature of the subject will permit them to be.

II.—THE ROMANS IN BRITAIN.

We learn, from the imperfect hints of ancient history, that, when the Romans first invaded Britain, her inhabitants were a bold, active, and warlike people, tenacious of their native liberty, and capable of bearing great fatigue; to which they were probably inured by an early education, and constant pursuit of such amusements as best suited the profession of a soldier; including hunting, running, leaping, swimming, and other exertions requiring strength and agility of body. Perhaps the skill which the natives of Devonshire and Cornwall retain to the present day, in hurling and wrestling, may properly be considered as a vestige of British activity. After the Romans had conquered Britain, they impressed such of the young men as were able to bear arms for foreign service, and enervated the spirit of the people by the importation of their own luxurious manners and habits; so that the latter part of the British history exhibits to our view a slothful and effeminate race of men, totally divested of that martial disposition, and love of freedom, which so strongly marked the character of their progenitors; and their

amusements, no doubt, partook of the same weakness and puerility.

III.—THE SAXONS.

The arrival of the Saxons forms a new epoch in the annals of this country. These military mercenaries came professedly to assist the Britons against their incessant tormentors the Picts and the Caledonians; but no sooner had they established their footing in the land, than they invited more of their countrymen to join them, and turning their arms against their wretched employers, became their most dangerous and most inexorable enemies, and in process of time obtained full possession of the largest and best part of the island; whence arose a total change in the form of government, laws, manners, customs, and habits of the people.

The sportive exercises and pastimes practised by the Saxons appear to have been such as were common among the ancient northern nations; and most of them consisted of robust exercises. In an old Chronicle of Norway,[1] we find it recorded of Olaf Tryggeson, a king of that country, that he was stronger and more nimble than any man in his dominions. He could climb up the rock Smalserhorn, and fix his shield upon the top of it; he could walk round the outside of a boat upon the oars, while the men were rowing; he could play with three darts, alternately throwing them in the air, and always kept two of them up, while he held the third in one of his hands; he was ambidexter, and could cast two darts at once; he excelled all the men of his time in shooting with the bow; and he had no equal in swimming. In one achievement this monarch was outdone by the Anglo-Saxon gligman, represented by the engraving No. 50,[2] who adds an equal number of balls to those knives or daggers. The Norman minstrel Tallefer, before the commencement of the battle at Hastings, cast his lance into the air three times, and caught it by the head in such a surprising manner, that the English thought it was done by the power of enchantment. Another northern hero, whose name was Kolson, boasts of nine accomplishments in which he was well skilled: "I know," says he, "how to play at chess; I can engrave Runic letters; I am expert at my book; I know how to handle

[1] Pontoppidan's History of Norway, p. 248.

[2] On p. 173.

the tools of the smith;[1] I can traverse the snow on skates of wood; I excel in shooting with the bow; I use the oar with facility; I can sing to the harp; and I compose verses."[2] The reader will, I doubt not, anticipate me in my observation, that the acquirements of Kolson indicate a much more liberal education than those of the Norwegian monarch: it must, however, be observed, that Kolson lived in an age posterior to him; and also, that he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which may probably account in great measure for his literary qualifications. Yet, we are well assured that learning did not form any prominent feature in the education of a young nobleman during the Saxon government: it is notorious, that Alfred the Great was twelve years of age before he learned to read; and that he owed his knowledge of letters to accident, rather than to the intention of his tutors. A book adorned with paintings in the hands of his mother, attracted his notice, and he expressed his desire to have it: she promised to comply with his request on condition that he learned to read it, which it seems he did; and this trifling incident laid the groundwork of his future scholarship.[3]

Indeed, it is not by any means surprising, under the Saxon government, when the times were generally very turbulent, and the existence of peace exceedingly precarious, and when the personal exertions of the opulent were so often necessary for the preservation of their lives and property, that such exercises as inured the body to fatigue, and biassed the mind to military pursuits, should have constituted the chief part of a young nobleman's education: accordingly, we find that hunting, hawking, leaping, running, wrestling, casting of darts, and other pastimes which necessarily required great exertions of bodily strength, were taught them in their adolescence. These amusements engrossed the whole of their attention, every one striving to excel his fellow; for hardiness, strength, and valour, out-balanced, in the public estimation, the accomplishments of the mind; and therefore literature, which flourishes best in tranquillity and retirement, was considered as a pursuit unworthy the notice of a soldier, and only requisite in the gloomy recesses of the cloister

Among the vices of the Anglo-Saxons may be reckoned their

[1] The famous Dunstan was also an excellent blacksmith.
[2] Olaü. Worm. Lit. Run. p. 129; Bartholin. p. 420.
[3] Asser. in Vit. Ælfredi.

propensity to gaming, and especially with the dice, which they derived from their ancestors; for Tacitus[1] assures us that the ancient Germans would not only hazard all their wealth, but even stake their liberty, upon the turn of the dice; "and he who loses," says the author, "submits to servitude, though younger and stronger than his antagonist, and patiently permits himself to be bound, and sold in the market; and this madness they dignify by the name of honour." Chess was also a favourite game with the Saxons; and likewise backgammon, said to have been invented about the tenth century. It appears moreover, that a large portion of the night was appropriated to the pursuit of these sedentary amusements. In the reign of Canute the Dane, this practice was sanctioned by the example of royalty, and followed by the nobility. Bishop Ætheric, having obtained admission to Canute about midnight upon some urgent business, found the king engaged with his courtiers at play, some at dice, and some at chess.[2] The clergy, however, were prohibited from playing at games of chance, by the ecclesiastical canons established in the reign of Edgar.[3]

IV.—THE NORMANS.

The popular sports and pastimes, prevalent at the close of the Saxon era, do not appear to have been subjected to any material change by the coming of the Normans: it is true, indeed, that the elder William and his immediate successors restricted the privileges of the chase, and imposed great penalties on those who presumed to destroy the game in the royal forests, without a proper licence.[4] By these restrictions the general practice of hunting was much confined, but by no means prohibited in certain districts, and especially to persons of opulence who possessed extensive territories of their own.

V.—TOURNAMENTS AND JUSTS.

Among the pastimes introduced by the Norman nobility, none engaged the general attention more than the tournaments and the justs. The tournament, in its original institution, was

[1] De Moribus Germ. [2] Hist. Ramsien. apud Gale, vol. i. an. 85.
[3] A. D. 960, can. 64, Johnson's Canons.
[4] See p. 6 in the body of the work.

a martial conflict, in which the combatants engaged without any animosity, merely to exhibit their strength and dexterity; but, at the same time, engaged in great numbers to represent a battle. The just was when two knights, and no more, were opposed to each other at one time. These amusements, in the middle ages, which may properly enough be denominated the ages of chivalry, were in high repute among the nobility of Europe, and produced in reality much of the pomp and gallantry that we find recorded with poetical exaggeration in the legends of knight-errantry. I met with a passage in a satirical poem among the Harleian MSS. of the thirteenth century,[1] which strongly marks the prevalence of this taste in the times alluded to. It may be thus rendered in English:

If wealth, sir knight, perchance be thine,
In tournaments you're bound to shine:
Refuse—and all the world will swear
You are not worth a rotten pear.[2]

VI.—OTHER SPORTS OF THE NOBILITY, AND THE CITIZENS AND YEOMEN.

While the principles of chivalry continued in fashion, the education of a nobleman was confined to those principles, and every regulation necessary to produce an accomplished knight was put into practice. In order fully to investigate these particulars, we may refer to the romances of the middle ages; and, generally speaking, dependence may be placed upon their information. The authors of these fictitious histories never looked beyond the customs of their own country; and whenever the subject called for a representation of remote magnificence, they depicted such scenes of splendour as were familiar to them: hence it is, that Alexander the Great, in his legendary life, receives the education of a Norman baron, and becomes expert in hawking, hunting, and other amusements coincident with the time in which the writer lived. Our early poets have fallen into the same kind of anachronism; and Chaucer himself, in the Knight's Tale, speaking of the rich array and furniture of the palace of Theseus, forgets that he was a Grecian prince of great antiquity, and describes the large hall belonging to an

[1] No. 2253, fol. 108.
[2] In the original it is purry poume, that is, rotten apple.

English nobleman, with the guests seated at table, probably as he had frequently seen them, entertained with singing, dancing, and other acts of minstrelsy, their hawks being placed upon perches over their heads, and their hounds lying round about upon the pavement below. The two last lines of the poem just referred to are peculiarly applicable to the manners of the time in which the poet lived, when no man of consequence travelled abroad without his hawk and his hounds. In the early delineations, the nobility are frequently represented seated at table, with their hawks upon their heads. Chaucer says,

> Ne what hawkes sytten on perchen above,
> Ne what houndes lyggen on the flour adoun.

The picture is perfect, when referred to his own time; but bears not the least analogy to Athenian grandeur. In the romance called The Knight of the Swan, it is said of Ydain duchess Roulyon, that she caused her three sons to be brought up in "all maner of good operacyons, vertues, and maners; and when in their adolescence they were somwhat comen to the age of strengthe, they," their tutors, "began to practyse them in shootinge with their bow and arbelstre,[1] to playe with the sword and buckeler, to runne, to just,[2] to playe with a poll-axe, and to wrestle; and they began to bear harneys,[3] to runne horses, and to approve them, as desyringe to be good and faythful knightes to susteyne the faith of God." We are not, however to conceive, that martial exercises in general were confined to the education of young noblemen: the sons of citizens and yeomen had also their sports resembling military combats. Those practised at an early period by the young Londoners seem to have been derived from the Romans; they consisted of various attacks and evolutions performed on horseback, the youth being armed with shields and pointless lances, resembling the ludus Trojæ, or Troy game, described by Virgil.[4] These amusements, according to Fitz Stephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II., were appropriated to the season of Lent; but at other times they exercised themselves with archery, fighting with clubs and bucklers, and running at the quintain; and in the winter, when the frost set in, they would go upon the ice, and run against

[1] The cross-bow.
[2] That is, to practise with lances, two persons running one against the other.
[3] Armour.
[4] See p. 126 of this work

each other with poles, in imitation of lances, in a just; and frequently one or both were beaten down, "not always without hurt; for some break their arms, and some their legs; but youth," says my author, "emulous of glory, seeks these exercises preparatory against the time that war shall demand their presence." The like kind of pastimes, no doubt, were practised by the young men in other parts of the kingdom.

VII.—KNIGHTLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

The mere management of arms, though essentially requisite, was not sufficient of itself to form an accomplished knight in the times of chivalry; it was necessary for him to be endowed with beauty, as well as with strength and agility of body; he ought to be skilled in music, to dance gracefully, to run with swiftness, to excel in wrestling, to ride well, and to perform every other exercise befitting his situation. To these were to be added urbanity of manners, strict adherence to the truth, and invincible courage. Hunting and hawking skilfully were also acquirements that he was obliged to possess, and which were usually taught him as soon as he was able to endure the fatigue that they required. Hence it is said of sir Tristram, a fictitious character held forth as the mirror of chivalry in the romance entitled The Death of Arthur, that "he learned to be an harper, passing all other, that there was none such called in any countrey: and so in harping and on instruments of musike he applied himself in his youth for to learne, and after as he growed in might and strength he laboured ever in hunting and hawking, so that we read of no gentlemen who more, or so, used himself therein; and he began good measures of blowing blasts of venery,[1] and chase, and of all manner of vermains;[2] and all these terms have we yet of hunting and hawking; and therefore the book of venery, and of hawking and hunting, is called the Boke of Sir Tristram." In a succeeding part of the same romance, king Arthur thus addresses the knight: "For all manner of hunting thou bearest the prize; and of all measures of blowing thou art the beginner, and of all the termes

[1] Hunting.

[2] In the first chapter, p. 17, the reader will find the animals to be hunted divided into three classes; namely, beasts of venery, beasts of chase, and raskals, or vermin. The horn was sounded in a different manner according to the class of the beasts pursued.

of hunting and hawking thou art the beginner."[1] We are also informed, that sir Tristram had previously learned the language of France, knew all the principles of courtly behaviour, and was skilful in the various requisites of knighthood. Another ancient romance says of its hero, "He every day was provyd in dauncyng and in songs that the ladies coulde think were convenable for a nobleman to conne;[2] but in every thinge he passed all them that were there. The king, for to assaie him, made justes and turnies; and no man did so well as he, in runnyng, playing at the pame,[3] shotyng, and castyng of the barre, ne found he his maister."[4]

VIII.—ESQUIRESHIP.

The laws of chivalry required that every knight should pass through two offices: the first was a page; and, at the age of fourteen, he was admitted an esquire. The office of the esquire consisted of several departments; the esquire for the body, the esquire of the chamber, the esquire of the stable, and the carving esquire; the latter stood in the hall at dinner, carved the different dishes, and distributed them to the guests. Several of the inferior officers had also their respective esquires.[5] Ipomydon, a king's son and heir, in the romance that bears his name, written probably at the commencement of the fourteenth century, is regularly taught the duties of an esquire, previous to his receiving the honours of knighthood; and for this purpose his father committed him to the care of a "learned and courteous knight called Sir 'Tholomew." Our author speaks on this subject in the following manner:

> 'Tholomew a clerke he toke,
> That taught the child uppon the boke
> Both to synge and to rede;
> And after he taught hym other dede.

[1] Morte Arthur, translated from the French by sir Thomas Mallory, knight, and first printed by Caxton, A. D. 1481. "The English," says a writer of our own country, "are so naturally inclined to pleasure, that there is no countrie wherein gentlemen and lords have so many and so large parkes, only reserved for the purpose of hunting." And again, "Our progenitors were so delighted with hunting, that the parkes are nowe growne infinite in number, and are thought to containe more fallow deere than all the Christian world besides." Itinerary of Fynes Moryson, published in 1617, part iii. book iii. cap. 3.

[2] To learn.

[3] Written also paume; that is, hand-tennice

[4] Romance of Three Kings' Sons and the King of Sicily, Harl. MS. 326.

[5] Mem. Anc. Cheval. tom. i. p. 16.

Afterward, to serve in halle
Both to grete and to smalle;
Before the kynge mete to kerve;
Hye and low fayre to serve.
Both of howndes and hawkis game,
After, he taught hym all; and same,
In sea, in feld, and eke in ryvere;
In woode to chase the wild dere,
And in feld to ryde a stede;
That all men had joy of hys dede.[1]

Here we find reading mentioned; which, however, does not appear to have been of any great importance in the middle ages, and is left out in the Geste of King Horne, another metrical romance,[2] which seems to be rather more ancient than the former. Young Horne is placed under the tuition of Athelbrus, the king's steward, who is commanded to teach him the mysteries of hawking and hunting, to play upon the harp,

Ant toggen o' the harpe
With his nayles sharpe,

to carve at the royal table, and to present the cup to the king when he sat at meat, with every other service fitting for him to know. The monarch concludes his injunctions with a repetition of the charge to instruct him in singing and music:

Tech him of harp and of song.

And the manner in which the king's carver performed the duties of his office is well described in the poem denominated the Squyer of Lowe Degree:[3]

There he arated him in scarlet red,
And set a chaplet upon his hedde;
A belte about his sydes two,
With brode barres to and fro;
A horne about his necke he caste;
And forth he went at the laste,
To do his office in the halle
Among the lordes both greate and small.
He toke a white yeard in his hand;
Before the kynge than gan he stande;
And sone he set hym on his knee,
And served the kynge ryght royally
With deynty meates that were dere.—

[1] Harl. MS. 2252. [2] Ibid.
[3] Printed by Copeland; black letter, without date; Garrick's Collection, K. vol. IX.

—And, when the squyer had done so,
He served them all[1] to and fro.
Eche man hym loved in honeste,
Hye and lowe in their degre;
So dyd the kyng—&c.

IX.—MILITARY SPORTS PATRONIZED BY THE LADIES.

Tournaments and justs were usually exhibited at coronations royal marriages, and other occasions of solemnity where pomp and pageantry were thought to be requisite. Our historians abound with details of these celebrated pastimes. The reader is referred to Froissart, Hall, Holinshed, Stow, Grafton, &c. who are all of them very diffuse upon this subject; and in the second volume of the Manners and Customs of the English are several curious representations of these military combats both on horseback and on foot.

One great reason, and perhaps the most cogent of any, why the nobility of the middle ages, nay, and even princes and kings, delighted so much in the practice of tilting with each other, is, that on such occasions they made their appearance with prodigious splendour, and had the opportunity of displaying their accomplishments to the greatest advantage. The ladies also were proud of seeing their professed champions engaged in these arduous conflicts; and, perhaps, a glove or riband from the hand of a favourite female might have inspired the receiver with as zealous a wish for conquest, as the abstracted love of glory; though in general, I presume, both these ideas were united; for a knight divested of gallantry would have been considered as a recreant, and unworthy of his profession.

X.—DECLINE OF MILITARY EXERCISES.

When the military enthusiasm which so strongly characterised the middle ages had subsided, and chivalry was on the decline, a prodigious change took place in the nurture and manners of the nobility. Violent exercises requiring the exertions of muscular strength grew out of fashion with persons of rank, and of course were consigned to the amusement of the vulgar; and the education of the former became proportionably more soft

[1] That is, all of the lords and other nobility who were seated in the hall.

and delicate. This example of the nobility was soon followed by persons of less consequence; and the neglect of military exercises prevailed so generally, that the interference of the legislature was thought necessary, to prevent its influence from being universally diffused, and to correct the bias of the common mind; for, the vulgar readily acquiesced with the relaxation of meritorious exertions, and fell into the vices of the times, resorting to such games and recreations as promoted idleness and dissipation, by which they lost their money, and, what is worse, their reputation, entailing poverty and distress on themselves and their families.

XI.—DECLINE OF CHIVALRY.

The romantic notions of chivalry appear to have lost their vigour towards the conclusion of the fifteenth century, especially in this country, where a continued series of intestine commotions employed the exertions of every man of property, and real battles afforded but little leisure to exercise the mockery of war. It is true, indeed, that tilts and tournaments, with other splendid exhibitions of military skill, were occasionally exercised, and with great brilliancy, so far as pomp and finery could contribute to make them attractive, till the end of the succeeding century. These splendid pastimes were encouraged by the sanction of royalty, and this sanction was perfectly political; on the one hand, it gratified the vanity of the nobility, and, on the other, it amused the populace, who, being delighted with such shows of grandeur, were thereby diverted from reflecting too deeply upon the grievances they sustained. It is, however, certain that the justs and tournaments of the latter ages, with all their pomp, possessed but little of the primitive spirit of chivalry.

XII.—MILITARY EXERCISES UNDER HENRY VII.

Henry VII. patronized the gentlemen and officers of his court in the practice of military exercises. The following extract may serve as a specimen of the manner in which they were appointed to be performed: "Whereas it ever hath bene of old antiquitie used in this realme of most noble fame, for all lustye gentlemen to passe the delectable season of summer after divers

manner and sondry fashions of disports, as in hunting the red and fallowe deer with houndes, greyhoundes, and with the bowe; also in hawking with hawkes of the tower; and other pastimes of the field. And bycause it is well knowen, that in the months of Maie and June, all such disports be not convenient; wherefore, in eschewing of idlenesse, the ground of all vice," and to promote such exercises as "shall be honourable, and also healthfull and profitable to the body," we "beseech your most noble highness to permit two gentlemen, assosyatying to them two other gentlemen to be their aides," by "your gracious licence, to furnish certain articles concerning the feates of armes hereafter ensuinge:"—"In the first place; On the twenty-second daye of Maie, there shall be a grene tree sett up in the lawnde of Grenwich parke; whereupon shall hange, by a grene lace, a vergescu[1] blanke; upon which white shield it shal be lawful for any gentleman that will answer the following chalenge to subscribe his name.—Secondly; The said two gentlemen, with their two aides, shal be redye on the twenty-thirde daie of Maie, being Thursdaye, and on Mondaye thence next ensewinge, and so everye Thursday and Monday untill the twentieth daye of June, armed for the foote, to answear all gentlemen commers, at the feate called the Barriers, with the casting-speare, and the targett, and with the bastard-sword,[2] after the manner following, that is to saie, from sixe of the clocke in the forenoone till sixe of the clocke in the afternoone during the time.—Thirdly; And the said two gentlemen, with their two aiders, or one of them, shall be there redye at the said place, the daye and dayes before rehearsed, to deliver any of the gentlemen answeares of one caste with the speare hedded with the morne,[3] and seven strokes with the sword, point and edge rebated, without close, or griping one another with handes, upon paine of punishment as the judges for the time being shall thinke requisite.—Fourthly; And it shall not be lawfull to the challengers, nor to the answearers, with the bastard sword to give or offer any foyne[4] to his match, upon paine of like punishment.—Fifthly; The challengers shall bringe into the fielde, the said daies and tymes, all manner of

[1] For vierge escu, a virgin shield, or a white shield, without any devices, such as was borne by the tyros in chivalry who had not performed any memorable action.
[2] A sword without edge or point, as it is explained in the following articles.
[3] That is, with heads without points, or blunted so that they could do no hurt.
[4] Foyne, or foin, signifies to push or thrust with the sword, instead of striking.

weapons concerning the said feates, that is to saye, casting speares hedded with mornes, and bastard swords with the edge and point rebated; and the answerers to have the first choise."[1]

XIII.—MILITARY EXERCISES UNDER HENRY VIII.

Henry VIII. not only countenanced the practice of military pastimes by permitting them to be exercised without restraint, but also endeavoured to make them fashionable by his own example. Hall assures us, that, even after his accession to the throne, he continued daily to amuse himself in archery, casting of the bar, wrestling, or dancing, and frequently in tilting, tournaying, fighting at the barriers with swords, and battle-axes, and such like martial recreations, in most of which there were few that could excel him. His leisure time he spent in playing at the recorders, flute, and virginals, in setting of songs, singing and making of ballads.[2] He was also exceedingly fond of hunting, hawking, and other sports of the field; and indeed his example so far prevailed, that hunting, hawking, riding the great horse, charging dexterously with the lance at the tilt, leaping, and running, were necessary accomplishments for a man of fashion.[3] The pursuits and amusements of a nobleman are placed in a different point of view by an author of the succeeding century;[4] who, describing the person and manners of Charles lord Mountjoy, regent of Ireland, in 1599, says, "He delighted in study, in gardens, in riding on a pad to take the aire, in playing at shovelboard, at cardes, and in reading of play-bookes for recreation, and especially in fishing and fish-ponds, seldome useing any other exercises, and useing these rightly as pastimes, only for a short and convenient time, and with great variety of change from one to the other." The game of shovelboard, though now considered as exceedingly vulgar, and practised by the lower classes of the people, was formerly in great repute among the nobility and gentry; and few of their mansions were without a shovelboard, which was a fashionable piece of furniture. The great hall was usually the place for its reception.

[1] Harl. MS. 69.
[2] Hall, in Life of Henry VIII.
[3] Arte of Rhetorike by Tho. Wilson, fol. 67.
[4] Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, published A. D. 1617.

XIV.—PRINCELY EXERCISES UNDER JAMES I.

We are by no means in the dark respecting the education of the nobility in the reign of James I.; we have, from that monarch's own hand, a set of rules for the nurture and conduct of an heir apparent to the throne, addressed to his eldest son Henry, prince of Wales. From the third book of this remarkable publication, entitled "ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΟΝ ΔΩΡΟΝ, or, a Kinge's Chistian Dutie towards God," I shall select such parts as respect the recreations said to be proper for the pursuit of a nobleman, without presuming to make any alteration in the diction of the royal author.

"Certainly," he says, "bodily exercises and games are very commendable, as well for bannishing of idleness, the mother of all vice; as for making the body able and durable for travell, which is very necessarie for a king. But from this court I debarre all rough and violent exercises; as the foote-ball, meeter for lameing, than making able, the users thereof; as likewise such tumbling trickes as only serve for comœdians and balladines to win their bread with: but the exercises that I would have you to use, although but moderately, not making a craft of them, are, running, leaping, wrestling, fencing, dancing, and playing at the caitch, or tennise, archerie, palle-malle, and such like other fair and pleasant field-games. And the honourablest and most recommendable games that yee can use on horseback; for, it becometh a prince best of any man to be a faire and good horseman: use, therefore, to ride and danton great and courageous horses;—and especially use such games on horseback as may teach you to handle your armes thereon, such as the tilt, the ring, and low-riding for handling of your sword.

"I cannot omit heere the hunting, namely, with running houndes, which is the most honourable and noblest sort thereof; for it is a theivish forme of hunting to shoote with gunnes and bowes; and greyhound hunting[1] is not so martial a game.

"As for hawkinge, I condemn it not; but I must praise it more sparingly, because it neither resembleth the warres so neere as hunting doeth in making a man hardie and skilfully ridden in all grounds, and is more uncertain and subject to mischances;

[1] Coursing, I presume, he means

and, which is worst of all, is there through an extreme stirrer up of the passions.

"As for sitting, or house pastimes—since they may at times supply the roome which, being emptie, would be patent to pernicious idleness—I will not therefore agree with the curiositie of some learned men of our age in forbidding cardes, dice, and such like games of hazard:[1] when it is foule and stormie weather, then I say, may ye lawfully play at the cardes or tables; for, as to diceing, I think it becommeth best deboshed souldiers to play at on the heads of their drums, being only ruled by hazard, and subject to knavish cogging; and as for the chesse, I think it over-fond, because it is over-wise and philosophicke a folly."

His majesty concludes this subject with the following good advice to his son: "Beware in making your sporters your councellors, and delight not to keepe ordinarily in your companie comœdians or balladines."

XV.—REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

The discontinuation of bodily exercises afforded a proportionable quantity of leisure time for the cultivation of the mind; so that the manners of mankind were softened by degrees, and learning, which had been so long neglected, became fashionable, and was esteemed an indispensable mark of a polite education. Yet some of the nobility maintained for a long time the old prejudices in favour of the ancient mode of nurture, and preferred exercise of the body to mental endowments; such was the opinion of a person of high rank, who said to Richard Pace, secretary to king Henry VIII., "It is enough for the sons of noblemen to wind their horn and carry their hawke fair, and leave study and learning to the children of meaner people."[2] Many of the pastimes that had been countenanced by the nobility, and sanctioned by their example, in the middle ages, grew into disrepute in modern times, and were condemned as vulgar and unbecoming the notice of a gentleman. "Throwing the hammer and wrestling," says Peacham, in his Complete Gentleman,

[1] I here omit a long train of royal reasoning in confutation of the assertions of the learned men his majesty alludes to in this passage.

[2] Biograph. Brit. p. 1230.

published in 1622, "I hold them exercises not so well beseeming nobility, but rather the soldiers in the camp and the prince's guard." On the contrary, sir William Forest, in his Poesye of Princelye Practice, a MS. in the Royal Library,[1] written in the year 1548, laying down the rules for the education of an heir apparent to the crown, or prince of the blood royal, writes thus:

> So must a prince, at some convenient brayde,
> In featis of maistries bestowe some diligence:
> Too ryde, runne, leape, or caste by violence
> Stone, barre, or plummett, or suche other thinge,
> It not refusethe any prince or kynge.

However, I doubt not both these authors spoke agreeably to the taste of the times in which they lived. Barclay, a more early poetic writer, in his Eclogues, first published in 1508, has made a shepherd boast of his skill in archery; to which he adds,

> I can dance the raye; I can both pipe and sing,
> If I were mery; I can both hurle and sling;
> I runne, I wrestle, I can well throwe the barre,
> No shepherd throweth the axeltree so farre;
> If I were mery, I could well leape and spring;
> I were a man mete to serve a prince or king.

XVI.—RECREATIONS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Burton, in his Anatomy of Melancholy, published in 1660, gives us a general view of the sports most prevalent in the seventeenth century. "Cards, dice, hawkes, and hounds," says he, "are rocks upon which men lose themselves, when they are imprudently handled, and beyond their fortunes." And again, "Hunting and hawking are honest recreations, and fit for some great men, but not for every base inferior person, who, while they maintain their faulkoner, and dogs, and hunting nags, their wealth runs away with their hounds, and their fortunes fly away with their hawks." In another place he speaks thus: "Ringing, bowling, shooting, playing with keel-pins, tronks, coits, pitching of bars, hurling, wrestling, leaping, running, fencing, mustering, swimming, playing with wasters, foils, foot-balls, balowns, running at the quintain, and the like, are common recreations of country folks; riding

[1] No. 17, D. iii.

of great horses, running at rings, tilts and tournaments, horse-races, and wild-goose chases, which are disports of greater men, and good in themselves, though many gentlemen by such means gallop quite out of their fortunes." Speaking of the Londoners, he says, "They take pleasure to see some pageant or sight go by, as at a coronation, wedding, and such like solemn niceties; to see an ambassador or a prince received and entertained with masks, shows, and fireworks. The country hath also his recreations, as May-games, feasts, fairs, and wakes." The following pastimes he considers as common both in town and country, namely, "bull-baitings and bear-baitings, in which our countrymen and citizens greatly delight, and frequently use; dancers on ropes, jugglers, comedies, tragedies, artillery gardens, and cock-fighting." He then goes on: "Ordinary recreations we have in winter, as cards, tables, dice, shovelboard, chess-play, the philosopher's game, small trunks, shuttlecock, billiards, music, masks, singing, dancing, ule-games, frolicks, jests, riddles, catches, cross purposes, questions and commands, merry tales of errant knights, queens, lovers, lords, ladies, giants, dwarfs, thieves, cheaters, witches, fairies, goblins, and friars." To this catalogue he adds: "Dancing, singing, masking, mumming, and stage-plays, are reasonable recreations, if in season; as are May-games, wakes, and Whitson-ales, if not at unseasonable hours, are justly permitted. Let them," that is, the common people, "freely feast, sing, dance, have puppet-plays, hobby-horses, tabers, crowds,[1] and bag-pipes:" let them "play at ball and barley-brakes;" and afterwards, "Plays, masks, jesters, gladiators, tumblers, and jugglers, are to be winked at, lest the people should do worse than attend them."

A character in the Cornish Comedy, written by George Powell, and acted at Dorset Garden in 1696, says, "What is a gentleman without his recreations? With these we endeavour to pass away that time which otherwise would lie heavily upon our hands. Hawks, hounds, setting-dogs, and cocks, with their appurtenances, are the true marks of a country gentleman." This character is supposed to be a young heir just come to his estate. "My cocks," says he, "are true cocks of the game—I make a match of cock-fighting, and then an hundred or two pounds are soon won, for I never fight a battle under."

[1] Crowd is an ancient name for the violin

XVII.—OLD SPORTS OF THE CITIZENS OF LONDON

In addition to the May-games, morris-dancings, pageants and processions, which were commonly exhibited throughout the kingdom in all great towns and cities, the Londoners had peculiar and extensive privileges of hunting, hawking, and fishing:[1] they had also large portions of ground allotted to them in the vicinity of the city for the practice of such pastimes as were not prohibited by the government, and for those especially that were best calculated to render them strong and healthy. We are told by Fitz Stephen, in the twelfth century, that on the holidays during the summer season, the young men of London exercised themselves in the fields with "leaping, shooting with the bow, wrestling, casting the stone, playing with the ball, and fighting with their shields." The last species of pastime, I believe, is the same that Stow, in his Survey of London, calls "practising with their wasters and bucklers;" which in his day was exercised by the apprentices before the doors of their masters. The city damsels had also their recreations on the celebration of these festivals, according to the testimony of both the authors just mentioned. The first tells us that they played upon citherns,[2] and danced to the music; and as this amusement probably did not take place before the close of the day, they were, it seems, occasionally permitted to continue it by moonlight. We learn from the other, who wrote at the distance of more than four centuries, that it was then customary for the maidens, after evening prayers, to dance in the presence of their masters and mistresses, while one of their companions played the measure upon a timbrel; and, in order to stimulate them to pursue this exercise with alacrity, the best dancers were rewarded with garlands, the prizes being exposed to public view, "hanged athwart the street," says Stow, during the whole of the performance. This recital calls to my mind a passage in Spenser's Epithalamium, wherein it appears that the dance was sometimes accompanied with singing. It runs thus:

> ——The damsels they delight,
> When they their timbrels smite,
> And thereunto dance and carol sweet.

[1] See the first and second chapters in the body of the work.

[2] The words of Fitz Stephen are, "Puellarum cithara ducit choros, et pede libero pulsatur tellus, usque imminente lunâ." The word cithara, Stow renders, but I think not justly, timbrels.

XVIII.—MODERN PASTIMES OF THE LONDONERS.

A general view of the pastimes practised by the Londoners soon after the commencement of the last century occurs in Strype's edition of Stow's Survey of London, published in 1720.[1] "The modern sports of the citizens," says the editor, "besides drinking, are cock-fighting, bowling upon greens, playing at tables, or backgammon, cards, dice, and billiards; also musical entertainments, dancing, masks, balls, stage-plays, and club-meetings, in the evening; they sometimes ride out on horseback, and hunt with the lord-mayor's pack of dogs when the common hunt goes out. The lower classes divert themselves at football, wrestling, cudgels, ninepins, shovelboard, cricket, stowball, ringing of bells, quoits, pitching the bar, bull and bear baitings, throwing at cocks," and, what is worst of all, lying at alehouses." To these are added, by an author of later date, Maitland, in his History of London, published in 1739, "Sailing, rowing, swimming and fishing, in the river Thames, horse and foot races, leaping, archery, bowling in allies, and skittles, tennice, chess, and draughts; and in the winter seating, sliding, and shooting." Duck-hunting was also a favourite amusement, but generally practised in the summer. The pastimes here enumerated were by no means confined to the city of London, or its environs: the larger part of them were in general practice throughout the kingdom.

XIX.—COTSWOLD AND CORNISH GAMES.

Before I quit this division of my subject, I shall mention the annual celebration of games upon Cotswold Hills, in Gloucestershire, to which prodigious multitudes constantly resorted. Robert Dover, an attorney, of Barton on the Heath, in the county of Warwick, was forty years the chief director of these pastimes. They consisted of wrestling, cudgel-playing, leaping, pitching the bar, throwing the sledge, tossing the pike, with various other feats of strength and activity; many of the country gentlemen hunted or coursed the hare; and the women danced. A castle of boards was erected on this occasion, from which guns were frequently discharged. "Captain Dover received

[1] Vol. i. p. 257.

permission from James I. to hold these sports; and he appeared at their celebration in the very clothes which that monarch had formerly worn, but with much more dignity in his air and aspect."[1] I do not mean to say that the Cotswold games were invented, or even first established, by captain Dover; on the contrary, they seem to be of much higher origin, and are evidently alluded to in the following lines by John Heywood the epigrammatist:[2]

> He fometh like a bore, the beaste should seeme bolde,
> For he is as fierce as a lyon of Cotsolde.

Something of the same sort, I presume, was the Carnival, kept every year, about the middle of July, upon Halgaver-moor, near Bodmin in Cornwall; "resorted to by thousands of people," says Heath, in his description of Cornwall, published in 1750. "The sports and pastimes here held were so well liked by Charles II. when he touched here in his way to Sicily, that he became a brother of the jovial society. The custom of keeping this carnival is said to be as old as the Saxons."

XX.—SPLENDOUR OF THE ANCIENT KINGS AND NOBILITY.

Paul Hentzner, a foreign writer, who visited this country at the close of the sixteenth century, says of the English, in his Itinerary, written in 1598, that they are "serious like the Germans, lovers of show, liking to be followed wherever they go by whole troops of servants, who wear their master's arms in silver."[3] This was no new propensity: the English nobility at all times affected great parade, seldom appearing abroad without large trains of servitors and retainers; and the lower classes of the people delighted in gaudy shows, pageants, and processions.

If we go back to the times of the Saxons, we shall find that, soon after their establishment in Britain, their monarchs assumed great state. Bede tells us that Edwin, king of Northumberland, lived in much splendour, never travelling without a numerous retinue; and when he walked in the streets of his own capital, even in the times of peace, he had a standard borne before him. This standard was of the kind called by the Romans tufa,

[1] Athen. Oxon. ii. col. 812; and see Granger's Biographical History, vol. ii. p. 398 8vo.

[2] In his Proverbs, part 1. chap. 11.

[3] Scuta ex argento facta.

and by the English knut: it was made with feathers of various colours, in the form of a globe, and fastened upon a pole."[1] It is unnecessary to multiply citations; for which reason, I shall only add another. Canute the Dane, who is said to have been the richest and most magnificent prince of his time in Europe, rarely appeared in public without being followed by a train of three thousand horsemen, well mounted and completely armed. These attendants, who were called house carles, formed a corps of body guards, or household troops, and were appointed for the honour and safety of that prince's person.[2] The examples of royalty were followed by the nobility and persons of opulence.

In the middle ages, the love of show was carried to an extravagant length; and as a man of fashion was nothing less than a man of letters, those studies that were best calculated to improve the mind were held in little estimation.

XXI.—ROYAL AND NOBLE ENTERTAINMENTS.

The courts of princes and the castles of the great barons were daily crowded with numerous retainers, who were always welcome to their masters' tables. The noblemen had their privy counsellors, treasurers, marshals, constables, stewards, secretaries, chaplains, heralds, pursuivants, pages, henchmen or guards, trumpeters, and all the other officers of the royal court.[3] To these may be added whole companies of minstrels, mimics, jugglers, tumblers, rope-dancers, and players; and especially on days of public festivity, when, in every one of the apartments opened for the reception of the guests, were exhibited variety of entertainments, according to the taste of the times, but in which propriety had very little share; the whole forming a scene of pompous confusion, where feasting, drinking, music, dancing, tumbling, singing, and buffoonery, were jumbled together, and mirth excited too often at the expense of common decency.[4] If we turn to the third Book of Fame, a poem written by our own countryman Chaucer, we shall find a perfect picture of these tumultuous court entertainments, drawn, I doubt not, from reality, and perhaps without

[1] Bede, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 16.
[2] Dr. Henry's Hist. vol. ii. lib. v. cap. 7.
[3] See the Northumberland Family-Book.
[4] Johan. Sarisburiensis, lib. i. c. 8. p. 34.

any exaggeration. It may be thus expressed in modern language: Minstrels of every kind were stationed in the receptacles for the guests; among them were jesters, that related tales of mirth and of sorrow; excellent players upon the harp, with others of inferior merit[1] seated on various seats below them, who mimicked their performances like apes to excite laughter; behind them, at a great distance, was a prodigious number of other minstrels, making a great sound with cornets, shaulms, flutes, horns,[2] pipes of various kinds, and some of them made with green corn,[3] such as are used by shepherds' boys; there were also Dutch pipers to assist those who chose to dance either "love-dances, springs, or rayes,"[4] or any other new-devised measures. Apart from these were stationed the trumpeters and players on the clarion; and other seats were occupied by different musicians playing variety of mirthful tunes. There were also present large companies of jugglers, magicians, and tregetors, who exhibited surprising tricks by the assistance of natural magic.

Vast sums of money were expended in support of these absurd and childish spectacles, by which the estates of the nobility were consumed, and the public treasuries often exhausted. But we shall have occasion to speak more fully on this subject hereafter.[5]

XXII.—CIVIC SHOWS.

The pageantry and shows exhibited in great towns and cities on occasions of joy and solemnity were equally deficient in taste and genius. At London, where they were most frequently required, that is to say, at the reception of foreign monarchs, at the processions of our own through the city of London to Westminster previous to their coronation, or at their return from abroad, and on various other occasions; besides such as occurred at stated times, as the lord-mayor's show, the setting of the midsummer watch, and the like, a considerable number of

[1] Smale harpers with ther glees.

[2] Cornmuse and Shalmes—many a floyte and lytlyngehorne.

[3] Pypes made of grene corne are also mentioned in the Romance of the Rose.

[4] These are the author's own words.

[5] In the chapters on Minstrels, Jugglers, &c. pp. 170, 197. The plays and pageants exhibited at court are described in the chapter treating on Theatrical Amusements. p. 150.

different artificers were kept, at the city's expense, to furnish the machinery for the pageants, and to decorate them. Stow tells us that, in his memory, great part of Leaden Hall was appropriated to the purpose of painting and depositing the pageants for the use of the city.

The want of elegance and propriety, so glaringly evident in these temporary exhibitions, was supplied, or attempted to be supplied, by a tawdry resemblance of splendour. The fronts of the houses in the streets through which the processions passed were covered with rich adornments of tapestry, arras, and cloth of gold; the chief magistrates and most opulent citizens usually appeared on horseback in sumptuous habits and joined the cavalcade; while the ringing of bells, the sound of music from various quarters, and the shouts of the populace, nearly stunned the ears of the spectators. At certain distances, in places appointed for the purpose, the pageants were erected, which were temporary buildings representing castles, palaces, gardens, rocks, or forests, as the occasion required, where nymphs, fawns, satyrs, gods, goddesses, angels, and devils, appeared in company with giants, savages, dragons, saints, knights, buffoons, and dwarfs, surrounded by minstrels and choristers; the heathen mythology, the legends of chivalry, and Christian divinity, were ridiculously jumbled together, without meaning; and the exhibition usually concluded with dull pedantic harangues, exceedingly tedious, and replete with the grossest adulation. The giants especially were favourite performers in the pageants; they also figured away with great applause in the pages of romance; and, together with dragons and necromancers, were created by the authors for the sole purpose of displaying the prowess of their heroes, whose business it was to destroy them.

Some faint traces of the processional parts of these exhibitions were retained at London in the lord mayor's show about twenty or thirty years ago;[1] but the pageants and orations have been long discontinued, and the show itself is so much contracted, that it is in reality altogether unworthy of such an appellation.

[1] [Before 1801.]

XXIII.—SETTING OUT OF PAGEANTS.

In an old play, the Historie of Promos and Cassandra, part the second, by George Whetstone, printed in 1578,[1] a carpenter, and others, employed in preparing the pageants for a royal procession, are introduced. In one part of the city the artificer is ordered "to set up the frames, and to space out the rooms, that the Nine Worthies may be so instauled as best to please the eye." The "Worthies" are thus named in an heraldical MS. in the Harleian Library:[2] "Duke Jossua; Hector of Troy; kyng David; emperour Alexander; Judas Machabyes; emperour Julyus Cæsar; kyng Arthur; emperour Charlemagne; and syr Guy of Warwycke;" but the place of the latter was frequently, and I believe originally, supplied by Godefroy, earl of Bologne: it appears, however, that any of them might be changed at pleasure: Henry VIII. was made a "Worthy" to please his daughter Mary, as we shall find a little farther on. In another part of the same play the carpenter is commanded to "erect a stage, that the wayghtes[3] in sight may stand;" one of the city gates was to be occupied by the fowre Virtues, together with "a consort of music;" and one of the pageants is thus whimsically described:

> They have Hercules of monsters conquering;
> Huge great giants, in a forrest, fighting
> With lions, bears, wolves, apes, foxes, and grayes,
> Baiards and brockes ————
> ———— Oh, these be wondrous frayes!

The stage direction then requires the entry of "Two men apparelled lyke greene men at the mayor's feast, with clubbs of fyreworks;" whose office, we are told, was to keep a clear passage in the street, "that the kyng and his trayne might pass with ease."—In another dramatic performance of later date, Green's Tu Quoque, or the City Gallant, by John Cooke, published in 1614, a city apprentice says, "By this light, I doe not thinke but to be lord mayor of London before I die; and have three pageants carried before me, besides a ship and an unicorn." The following passage occurs in Selden's Table Talk, under the article Judge, "We see the pageants in Cheapside, the lions

[1] Garrick's Collection of Old Plays, H. vol. iii. [2] No. 2220, fol. 7

[3] Or waits, the band of city minstrels.

and the elephants; but we do not see the men that carry them we see the judges look big like lions; but we do not see who moves them."

XXIV.- PROCESSIONS OF QUEEN MARY AND KING PHILIP OF SPAIN IN LONDON.

In the foregoing quotations, we have not the least necessity to make an allowance for poetical licence: the historians of the time will justify the poets, and perfectly clear them from any charge of exaggeration; and especially Hall, Grafton, and Holinshed, who are exceedingly diffuse on this and such like popular subjects. The latter has recorded a very curious piece of pantomimical trickery exhibited at the time that the princess Mary went in procession through the city of London, the day before her coronation:—At the upper end of Grace-church-Street there was a pageant made by the Florentines; it was very high; and "on the top thereof there stood foure pictures; and in the midst of them, and the highest, there stood an angell, all in greene, with a trumpet in his hand; and when the trumpetter who stood secretlie within the pageant, did sound his trumpet, the angell did put his trumpet to his mouth, as though it had been the same that had sounded." A similar deception but on a more extensive scale, was practised at the gate of Kenelworth Castle for the reception of queen Elizabeth.[1] Holinshed, speaking of the spectacles exhibited at London, when Philip king of Spain, with Mary his consort, made their public entry in the city, calls them, in the margin of his Chronicle, "the vaine pageants of London;" and he uses the same epithet twice in the description immediately subsequent; "Now," says he, "as the king came to London, and as he entered at the drawbridge, [on London Bridge,] there was a vaine great spectacle, with two images representing two giants, the one named Corineus, and the other Gog-magog, holding betweene them certeine Latin verses, which, for the vaine ostentation of flatterye, I overpasse."[2] He then adds: "From the

[1] See further on, p. xlvi.

[2] These passages do not prove that the historian was disgusted with the pageantry, abstractedly considered, but rather with the occasion of its exhibition; for, he speaks of the same kind of spectacles, with commendation, both anterior and subsequent to the present show, which do not appear to have had the least claim for superiority in point of reason or consistency.

bridge they passed to the conduit in Gratious-street, which was finely painted; and, among other things," there exhibited, "were the Nine Worthies; of these king Henry VIII. was one. He was painted in harnesse, [1] having in one hand a sword, and in the other hand a booke, whereupon was written Verbum Dei.[2] He was also delivering, as it were, the same booke to his sonne king Edward VI. who was painted in a corner by him." This device, it seems, gave great offence; and the painter, at the queen's command, was summoned before the bishop of Winchester, then lord chancellor, where he met with a very severe reprimand, and was ordered to erase the inscription; to which he readily assented, and was glad to have escaped at so easy a rate from the peril that threatened him; but in his hurry to remove the offensive words, he rubbed out "the whole booke, and part of the hand that held it."[3]

The Nine Worthies appear to have been favourite characters, and were often exhibited in the pageants; those mentioned in the preceding passage were probably nothing more than images of wood or pasteboard. These august personages were not, however, always degraded in this manner, but, on the contrary, they were frequently personified by human beings uncouthly habited, and sometimes mounted on horseback. They also occasionally harangued the spectators as they passed in the procession.

XXV.—CHESTER PAGEANTS.

The same species of shows, but probably not upon so extensive a scale, were exhibited in other cities and large towns throughout the kingdom. I have now before me an ordinance for the mayor, aldermen, and common councilmen of the city of Chester, to provide yearly for the setting of the watch, on the eve of the festival of Saint John the Baptist, a pageant, which is expressly said to be "according to ancient custome," consisting of four giants, one unicorn, one dromedary, one luce,[4] one camel, one ass, one dragon, six hobby-horses, and sixteen naked boys. This ordinance among the Harleian MSS.[5] is dated 1564. In another MS. in the same library, it is said, "A. D. 1599, Henry Hardware, esq. the mayor, was a godlv and zealous man;" he

[1] Armour.

[2] "The Word of God;" meaning the Bible published in English by his authority, which was prohibited in the sanguinary reign of his fanatic daughter.

[3] Holinshed, vol. iii. pp. 1091, 1120, &c.

[4] Called below a flower-de-luce, an animal I am not in the least acquainted with

[5] No. 1968.

caused "the gyauntes in the midsomer show to be broken," and not to goe; the devil in his feathers," alluding perhaps to some fantastic representation not mentioned in the former ordinance, "he put awaye, and the cuppes and cannes, and the dragon and the naked boys." In a more modern hand it is added, "And he caused a man in complete armour to go in their stead. He also caused the bull-ring to be taken up," &c. But in the year 1601, John Ratclyffe, beer-brewer, being mayor, "sett out the giaunts and midsommer show, as of oulde it was wont to be kept."[1] In the time of the Commonwealth this spectacle was discontinued, and the giants, with the beasts, were destroyed. At the restoration of Charles II. it was agreed by the citizens to replace the pageant as usual, on the eve o the festival of St. John the Baptist, in 1661; and as the following computation of the charges for the different parts of the show are exceedingly curious, I shall lay them before the reader without any farther apology. We are told that "all things were to be made new, by reason the ould modells were all broken." The computist then proceeds: "For finding all the materials, with the workmanship of the four great giants, all to be made new, as neere as may be lyke as they were before, at five pounds a giant the least that can be, and four men to carry them at two shillings and six pence each." The materials for the composition of these monsters are afterwards specified to be "hoops of various magnitudes, and other productions of the cooper, deal boards, nails, pasteboard, scaleboard, paper of various sorts, with buckram, size cloth, and old sheets for their bodies, sleeves, and shirts, which were to be coloured." One pair of the "olde sheets" were provided to cover the "father and mother giants." Another article specifies "three yards of buckram for the mother's and daughter's hoods;" which seems to prove that three of these stupendous pasteboard personages were the representatives of females. There were "also tinsille, tinfoil, gold and silver leaf, and colours of different kinds, with glue and paste in abundance." Respecting the last article, a very ridiculous entry occurs in the bill of charges, it runs thus: "For arsnick to put into the paste to save the giants from being eaten by the rats, one shilling and fourpence." But to go on with the estimate. "For the new making the city mount, called the maior's mount, as auntiently it was, and for hreing of bays for the same, and a man to carry it, three

[1] Harl. MS. 2125

pounds six shillings and eight pence." The bays mentioned in this and the succeeding article was hung round the bottom of the frame, and extended to the ground, or near it, to conceal the bearers. "For making anew the merchant mount, as it aunciently was, with a ship to turn round, the hiring of the bays, and five men to carry it, four pounds." The ship and new dressing it, is charged at five shillings; it was probably made with pasteboard, which seems to have been a principal article in the manufacturing of both the moveable mountains; it was turned by means of a swivel attached to an iron handle underneath the frame. In the bill of charges for "the merchant's mount," is an entry of twenty pence paid to a joyner for cutting the pasteboard into several images. "For making anew the elephant and castell, and a Cupid," with his bow and arrows, "suitable to it," the castle was covered with tinfoil, and the Cupid with skins, so as to appear to be naked, "and also for two men to carry them, one pound sixteen shillings and eight-pence. For making anew the four beastes called the unicorne, the antelop, the flower-de-luce, and the camell, one pound sixteen shillings and fourpence apiece, and for eight men to carry them, sixteen shillings. For four hobby-horses, six shillings and eight-pence apiece; and for four boys to carry them, four shillings. For hance-staves, garlands, and balls, for the attendants upon the mayor and sheriffs, one pound nineteen shillings. For makinge anew the dragon, and for six naked boys to beat at it, one pound sixteen shillings. For six morris-dancers, with a pipe and tabret, twenty shillings."

The sports exhibited on occasions of solemnity did not terminate with the pageants and processions: the evening was generally concluded with festivity and diversions of various kinds to please the populace. These amusements are well described in a few lines by an early dramatic poet, whose name is not known; his performance is entitled A pleasant and stately Morall of the Three Lordes of London, black letter, no date:[1]

> ———Let nothing that's magnifical,
> Or that may tend to London's graceful state,
> Be unperformed, as showes and solemne feasts,
> Watches in armour, triumphes, cresset lights,
> Bonefires, belles, and peales of ordinaunce
> And pleasure. See that plaies be published,
> Mai-games and maskes, with mirthe and minstrelsie.
> Pageants and school-feastes, beares and puppet-plaies.

[1] Garrick's Collection of Old Plays.

The "cresset light" was a large lanthorn placed upon a long pole, and carried upon men's shoulders. There is extant a copy of a letter from Henry VII. to the mayor and aldermen of London, commanding them to make bonfires, and to show other marks of rejoicing in the city, when the contract was ratified for the marriage of his daughter Mary with the prince of Castile.[1]

XXVI.—PUBLIC SHOWS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

These motley displays of pomp and absurdity, proper only for the amusement of children, or to excite the admiration of the populace, were, however, highly relished by the nobility, and repeatedly exhibited by them, on extraordinary occasions. One would think, indeed, that the repetitions would have been intolerable; on the contrary, for want of more rational entertainments, they maintained for ages their popularity, and do not appear to have lost the smallest portion of their attraction by the frequency of representation. Shows of this kind were never more fashionable than in the sixteenth century, when they were generally encouraged by persons of the highest rank, and exhibited with very little essential variation; and especially during the reign of Henry VIII.[2] His daughter Elizabeth appears to have been equally pleased with this species of pageantry; and therefore it was constantly provided for her amusement, by the nobility whom she visited from time to time, in her progresses or excursions to various parts of the kingdom.[3] I shall simply give the outlines of a succession of entertainments contrived to divert her when she visited the earl of Leicester at Kenelworth castle, and this shall serve as a specimen for the rest.

XXVII.—QUEEN ELIZABETH AT KENELWORTH.

Her majesty came thither on Saturday the ninth of July, 1575;[4] she was met near the castle by a fictitious Sibyl, who promised peace and prosperity to the country during her reign. Over the first gate of the castle there stood six gigantic figures with trumpets, real trumpeters being stationed behind them,

[1] Cotton MS. Titus, B. i.

[2] See the account of the court ludi in the chapter on Theatrical Exhibitions.

[3] The reader may find accounts of most of these excursions in a work entitled The Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, in two volumes 4to. published by Mr. Nichols.

[4] This account is chiefly taken from a small pamphlet called Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle. Progresses, vol. i.

who sounded as the queen approached. This pageant was childish enough, but not more so than the reason for its being placed there. "By this dumb show," says my author, "it was meant that in the daies of king Arthur, men were of that stature; so that the castle of Kenelworth should seem still to be kept by king Arthur's heirs and their servants." Laneham says these figures were eight feet high. Upon her majesty entering the gateway, the porter, in the character of Hercules, made an oration, and presented to her the keys. Being come into the base court, a lady "came all over the pool, being so conveyed, that it seemed she had gone upon the water; she was attended by two water nymphs, and calling herself the Lady of the Lake, she addressed her majesty with a speech prepared for the purpose." The queen then proceeded to the inner court, and passed the bridge, which was railled on both sides, and the tops of the posts were adorned with "sundry presents and gifts," as of wine, corn, fruits, fishes, fowls, instruments of music, and weapons of war. Laneham calls the adorned posts "well-proportioned pillars turned:" he tells us there were fourteen of them, seven on each side of the bridge; on the first pair were birds of various kinds alive in cages, said to be the presents of the god Silvanus; on the next pair were different sorts of fruits in silver bowls, the gift of the goddess Pomona; on the third pair were different kinds of grain in silver bowls, the gift of Ceres; on the fourth, in silvered pots, were red and white wine with clusters of grapes in a silver bowl, the gift of Bacchus; on the fifth were fishes of various kinds in trays, the donation of Neptune; on the sixth were weapons of war, the gift of Mars; and on the seventh, various musical instruments, the presents of Apollo. The meaning of these emblematical decorations was explained in a Latin speech delivered by the author of it. Then an excellent band of music began to play as her majesty entered the inner court, where she alighted from her horse, and went up stairs to the apartments prepared for her.

On Sunday evening she was entertained with a grand display of fireworks, as well in the air as upon the water.

On Monday, after a great hunting, she was met on her return by Gascoigne the poet, so disguised as to represent a savage man, who paid her many high-flown compliments in a kind of dialogue between himself and an echo.

On Tuesday she was diverted with music, dancing, and an interlude upon the water

On Wednesday was another grand hunting.

On Thursday she was amused with a grand bear-beating, to which were added tumbling and fire-works. Bear-beating and bull-baiting were fashionable at this period, and considered as proper pastimes for the amusement of ladies of the highest rank. Elizabeth, though a woman, possessed a masculine mind, and preferred, or affected to prefer, the exercises of the chace and other recreations pursued by men, rather than those usually appropriated to her sex.

On Friday, the weather being unfavourable, there were no open shows.

On Saturday there was dancing within the castle, and a country brideale, with running at the quintain in the castle yard, and a pantomimical show called "the Old Coventry Play of Hock Thursday," performed by persons who came from Coventry for that purpose. In the evening a regular play was acted, succeeded by a banquet and a masque.

On the Sunday there was no public spectacle.

On the Monday there was a hunting in the afternoon, and, on the queen's return, she was entertained with another show upon the water, in which appeared a person in the character of Arion, riding upon a dolphin twenty-four feet in length; and he sung an admirable song, accompanied with music performed by six musicians concealed in the belly of the fish. Her majesty, it appears, was much pleased with this exhibition. The person who entertained her majesty in the character of Arion is said to have been Harry Goldingham, of whom the following anecdote is related: "There was a spectacle presented to queen Elizabeth upon the water, and among others, Harry Goldingham was to represent Arion upon the back of a dolphin; but finding his voice to be very hoarse and unpleasant when he came to perform his part, he tears off his disguise, and swears that he was none of Arion, not he, but even honest Harry Goldingham; which blunt discoverie pleased the queen better than if it had gone thorough in the right way. Yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceedingly well."[1] This story has been applied to the performance above mentioned, but I trust mistakenly; it certainly must have happened on some other occasion, for such a circumstance would not have escaped the observation of the facetious Laneham; besides it appears in this instance that

[1] Harl. MS 6395, entitled Merry Passages and Jests, art 221.

the part of Arion was performed without defect, and the song well executed.

On Tuesday the Coventry play was repeated, because the queen had not seen the whole of it on Saturday.

On Wednesday, the twentieth of the same month, she departed from Kenelworth. Various other pastimes were prepared upon this occasion; but, for want of time and opportunity, they could not be performed.

XXVIII.—LOVE OF PUBLIC SIGHTS ILLUSTRATED FROM SHAKSPEARE.

The English are particularised for their partiality to strange sights; uncommon beasts, birds, or fishes, are sure to attract their notice, and especially such of them as are of the monstrous kind; and this propensity of our countrymen is neatly satirised by Shakspeare in the Tempest; where Stephano, seeing Caliban lying upon the stage, and being uncertain whether he was a fish, a beast, or one of the inhabitants of the island, speaks in the following manner: "Were I in England now, as once I was, and had this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give me a piece of silver. There would this monster make a man: any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian."[1] Indeed, we may observe that a cow with two heads, a pig with six legs, or any other unnatural production, with proper management, are pretty certain fortunes to the possessors.

XXIX.—ROPE-DANCING, TUTORED ANIMALS, AND PUPPET-SHOWS.

They also take great delight in seeing men and animals perform such feats as appear to be entirely contrary to their nature; as, men and monkeys dancing upon ropes, or walking upon wires; dogs dancing minuets, pigs arranging letters so as to form words at their master's command; hares beating drums, or birds firing off cannons. These exhibitions, for all of them

[1] Tempest, act ii. scene iv

have in reality been brought to public view, are ridiculed by the Spectator, in a paper dated the 3d of April, 1711. The author pretends that he received the following letter from a show-man who resided near Charing-Cross:

"Honoured Sir,—Having heard that this nation is a great encourager of ingenuity, I have brought with me a rope-dancer that was caught in one of the woods belonging to the great Mogul. He is by birth a monkey, but swings upon a rope, takes a pipe of tobacco, and drinks a glass of ale, like any reasonable creature.[1] He gives great satisfaction to the quality; and if they will make a subscription for him, I will send for a brother of his out of Holland, that is a very good tumbler; and also for another of the same family whom I design for my merry-andrew, as being an excellent mimic, and the greatest droll in the country where he now is. I hope to have this entertainment in readiness for the next winter; and doubt not but it will please more than the opera or the puppet-show. I will not say that a monkey is a better man than some of the opera heroes; but certainly he is a better representative of a man than any artificial composition of wood and wire."

The latter part of this sarcasm relates to a feigned dispute for seniority between Powel, a puppet-showman, who exhibited his wooden heroes under the little piazza in Covent-garden, and the managers of the Italian opera; which is mentioned in a preceding paper[2] to this effect: "The opera at the Haymarket, and that under the little piazza of Covent-garden, are at present the two leading diversions of the town; Powel professing in his advertisements to set up Whittington and his Cat against Rinaldo and Armida."—After some observations, which are not immediately to the present purpose, the author proceeds: "I observe that Powel and the undertakers of the opera had both of them the same thought, and I think much about the same time, of introducing animals on their several stages, though indeed with different success. The sparrows and chaffinches

[1] There actually was such a monkey exhibited at that time near Charing-Cross, but in the bills which were given to the public he is called a Wild Hairy Man, and they tell us he performed all that the Spectator relates concerning him; but this subject is treated more fully in the body of the work.

[2] Spectator, vol. i. No. 14.

at the Haymarket fly as yet very irregularly over the stage, and instead of perching on the trees, and performing their parts, these young actors either get into the galleries, or put out the candles; whereas Powel has so well disciplined his pig, that in the first scene he and Punch dance a minuet together. I am informed that Powel resolves to excel his adversaries in their own way, and introduce larks into his opera of Susanna, or Innocence betrayed; which will be exhibited next week with a pair of new elders."

From the same source of information, in a subsequent paper,[1] we may find a catalogue of the most popular spectacles exhibited in London at the commencement of the last century. Our author has introduced a projector, who produces a scheme for an opera entitled The Expedition of Alexander the Great; and proposes to bring in "all the remarkable shows about the town among the scenes and decorations of his piece;" which is described in the following manner: "This Expedition of Alexander opens with his consulting the Oracle at Delphos; in which the Dumb Conjurer, who has been visited by so many persons of quality of late years, is to be introduced as telling his fortune; at the same time Clench of Barnet[2] is represented in another corner of the temple, as ringing the bells of Delphos for joy of his arrival. The Tent of Darius is to be peopled by the ingenious Mrs. Salmon, where Alexander is to fall in love with a piece of waxwork that represents the beautiful Statira. When Alexander comes to that country in which, Quintus Curtius tells us, the dogs were so exceedingly fierce, that they would not loose their hold, though they were cut to pieces limb by limb, and that they would hang upon their prey by their teeth when they had nothing but a mouth left, there is to be a scene of Hockley in the Hole, in which are to be represented all the diversions of that place, the Bull-Baiting only excepted, which cannot possibly be exhibited in the theatre by reason of the lowness of the roof. The several Woods in Asia, which Alexander must be supposed to pass through, will give the audience a sight of Monkies dancing upon ropes, with many other pleasantries of that ludicrous species. At the same time,

[1] Spectator, vol. i. No 31, dated Thursday, April 5, 1711.

[2] A man famous at that time for imitating a variety of musical instruments with his voice, and, among others, the bells. See his bill of performance, at p. 252.

if there chance to be any strange animals in town, whether birds or beasts, they may be either let loose among the woods, or driven across the stage by some of the country people of Asia. In the last Great Battle, Pinkethman is to personate king Porus upon an Elephant, and is to be encountered by Powel, representing Alexander the Great upon a Dromedary, which, nevertheless, he is desired to call by the name of Bucephalus. On the close of this great Decisive Battle, when the two Kings are thoroughly reconciled, to show the mutual friendship and good correspondence that reigns between them, they both of them go together to a puppet-show, in which the ingenious Mr. Powel junior may have an opportunity of displaying his whole art of machinery for the diversion of the two monarchs." It is further added, that, "after the reconciliation of these two kings, they might invite one another to dinner, and either of them entertain his guest with the German artist, Mr. Pinkethman's Heathen Gods, or any of the like Diversions which shall then chance to be in vogue."

The projector acknowledged the thought was not originally his own, but that he had taken the hint from "several Performances he had seen upon our stage; in one of which there was a Raree Show, in another a Ladder-Dance, and in others a posture or a moving picture with many curiosities of the like nature."[1]

XXX.—MINSTRELSY, BELL-RINGING, &c.

The people of this country in all ages delighted in secular music, songs, and theatrical performances;[2] which is abundantly evident from the great rewards they gave to the bards, the scalds, the gleemen, and the minstrels, who were successively the favourites of the opulent, and the idols of the vulgar. The continual encouragement given to these professors of music, poetry, and pantomime, in process of time swelled their numbers beyond all reasonable proportion, inflamed their pride, increased their avarice, and corrupted their manners; so that at

[1] All these pastimes the reader will find particularised, under their proper heads, in the body of the work.

[2] "To pass over griefe," says an author of our own, "the Italians sleepe, the English go to playes, the Spaniards lament, and the Irish bowl," &c. Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, in 1617, part iii. book i. cap. 3.

length they lost the favour they had so long enjoyed among the higher classes of society; and, the donations of the populace not being sufficient for their support, they fell away from affluence to poverty, and wandered about the country in a contemptible condition, dependent upon the casual rewards they might occasionally pick up at church-ales, wakes, and fairs.[1]

Hentzner, who wrote at the conclusion of the sixteenth century, says, "the English excel in dancing and music, for they are active and lively." A little further on he adds, "they are vastly fond of great noises that fill the ear, such as the firing of cannon, beating of drums, and the ringing of bells; so that it is common for a number of them that have got a glass in their heads to get up into some belfry and ring the bells for hours together for the sake of exercise."[2] Polydore Vergil mentions another remarkable singularity belonging to the English, who celebrated the festival of Christmas with plays, masques, and magnificent spectacles, together with games at dice and dancing, which, he tells us, was as ancient as the year 1170, and not customary with other nations;[3] and with respect to the Christmas prince, or lord of the misrule, he was, as the same author informs us, a personage almost peculiar to this country.[4]

XXXI.—BAITING OF ANIMALS.

It were well if these singularities were the only vulnerable parts of the national character of our ancestors; but it must be confessed that there are other pastimes which equally attracted their attention, and manifested a great degree of barbarism, which will admit of no just defence. Sir Richard Steele, reprobating the inhumanity of throwing at cocks, makes these pertinent observations: "Some French writers have represented this diversion of the common people much to our disadvantage, and imputed it to a natural fierceness and cruelty of temper, as they do some other entertainments peculiar to our nation; I mean those elegant diversions of bull-baiting, and prize-fighting, with the like ingenious recreations of the bear-garden. I wish

[1] The reader will find this subject particularly treated on, in the chapter that relates to minstrels and music, in the body of the work.

[2] Hentzner's Itinerary, published by lord Orford, at Strawberry-hill, pp. 88, 89.

[3] Hist. Angl. lib. xiii. [4] De Rerum Invent. lib. v. cap. 2.

I know how to answer this reproach which is cast upon us, and excuse the death of so many innocent cocks, bulls, dogs, and bears, as have been set together by the ears, or died an untimely death, only to make us sport."[1]

The ladies of the present day will probably be surprised to hear, that all, or the greater part of these barbarous recreations, were much frequented by the fair sex, and countenanced by those among them of the highest rank and most finished education, being brought by degrees, no doubt, to sacrifice their feelings to the prevalency of a vicious and vulgar fashion, which even the sanction of royalty, joined with that of ancient custom, cannot reconcile with decency or propriety.

XXXII.—PASTIMES FORMERLY ON SUNDAYS.

I know not of any objection that can have more weight in the condemnation of these national barbarisms, than the time usually appropriated for the exhibition of them; which, it seems, was the after part of the Sabbath-day. The same portion of time also was allotted for the performance of plays, called, in the writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "vaine playes and interludes;"[2] to which are added, "dice and card-playing, dancing, and other idle pastimes." Stephen Gosson, a very zealous, if not a very correct writer, declaiming vehemently against plays and players, says of the latter, "because they are permitted to play every Sunday, they make four or five Sundayes at leaste every weeke."[3] Nor is he less severe upon those who frequented such amusements: "To celebrate the Sabbath," says he, "they go to the theatres, and there keepe a general market of bawdrie; by which means," as he afterwards expresses himself, "they make the theatre a place of assignation, and meet for worse purposes than merely seeing the play."[4] A contemporary writer, endeavouring to prove the impropriety of an established form of prayer for the church service, among other

[1] Tatler, No. 134, dated Thursday, Feb. 16, 1709.

[2] See a pamphlet written by John Northbrooke, published in the reign of queen Elizabeth, without date.

[3] School of Abuse, published 1579.

[4] Gosson, I hope, was acquainted with the vulgar part of the audience only, or, which is more probable, spoke from report, and that exaggerated

arguments, uses the following: "He," meaning the minister, "posteth it over as fast as he can galloppe; for, eyther he hath two places to serve; or else there are some games to be playde in the afternoon, as lying for the whetstone, heathenishe dauncing for the ring, a beare or a bull to be baited, or else a jackanapes to ride on horsebacke, or an interlude to be plaide; and, if no place else can be gotten, this interlude must be playde in the church. We speak not of ringing after matins is done."[1] To what has been said, I shall add the following verses, which made their appearance rather earlier than either of the foregoing publications; and they describe, with much accuracy I doubt not, the manner of spending the Sunday afternoons according to the usage of that time: but it is proper previously to observe, that such amusements on holidays were by no means peculiar to the young gallants of this country, but equally practised upon the continent.

> Now, when their dinner once is done, and that they well have fed,
> To play they go; to casting of the stone, to runne, or shoote;
> To tosse the light and windy ball aloft with hand or foote;
> Some others trie their skill in gonnes; some wrastell all the day;
> And some to schooles of fence do goe, to gaze upon the play;
> Another sort there is, that doe not love abroad to roame,
> But, for to passe their time at cardes, or tables, still at home.[2]

XXXIII.—ROYAL INTERFERENCE WITH SUNDAY PASTIMES.

Citations to this purpose might be made from infinity of pamphlets, written professedly against the profanation of the Sabbath: it was certainly an evil that called loudly for redress; and the pens of various writers, moral and religious, as well of the clergy as the laity, have been employed for that purpose. There are some few treatises on this subject that do honour to their authors; but far the larger part of them are of a different description, consisting of vehement and abusive declamations, wherein the zeal of the writers is too frequently permitted to run at random, without the least restraint from reason and moderation, and, what is still worse, without that strict adherence

[1] Admonition to Parliament, by Tho. Cartwright, published A.D. 1572.

[2] Still, for stay. The Pope's Kingdom, book iv. translated from the Latin of Tho Neogeorgus, by Barnabe Googe, and dedicated to queen Elizabeth, A. D. 1570.

to the truth which the seriousness of the subject necessarily required. It must be granted, however, that the continued remonstrances from the grave and religious parts of the community were not without effect. In the twenty-second year of the reign of Elizabeth, the magistrates of the city of London obtained from the queen an edict, "that all heathenish playes and interludes should be banished upon Sabbath days;"[1] but this restriction, I apprehend, was confined to the jurisdiction of the lord mayor; for, it is certain that such amusements were publicly exhibited in other districts, and especially at the Paris Garden in Southwark, a place where these sort of sports were usually exhibited; and where three years afterwards a prodigious concourse of people being assembled together on a Sunday afternoon, to "see plays and a bear-baiting, the whole theatre gave way and fell to the ground; by which accident many of the spectators were killed, and more hurt."[2] This lamentable misfortune was considered as a judgment from God, and occasioned a general prohibition of all public pastimes on the Sabbath-day. The wise successor of Elizabeth, on the other hand, thought that the restrictions on the public sports were too generally and too strictly applied, and especially in the country places; he therefore published on the 24th of May, 1618, the following declaration: "Whereas we did justly, in our progresse through Lancashire, rebuke some puritanes and precise people, in prohibiting and unlawfully punishing of our good people for using their lawfull recreations and honest exercises on Sundayes and other holy dayes, after the afternoone sermon or service: It is our will, that after the end of divine service, our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged, from any lawful recreation, such as dauncing, either for men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation; nor for having of May-games, Whitson-ales, and morris-daunces, and the setting up of May-poles, and other sports therewith used; so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of divine service. But withall, we doe here account still as prohibitted, all unlawfull games to be used upon Sundayes onely, as beare

[1] John Field, in his Declaration of God's Judgment at Paris Garden, published A. D. 1503, fol. 9.

[2] Field, ut supra. See also D. Beard's Theatre of God's Judgments.

and bull-baitings, interludes, and, at all times in the meaner sort of people by law prohibited, bowling." This proclamation was renewed by Charles I. in the eighth year of his reign; which occasioned many serious complaints from the puritanical party; but, three years afterwards, a pamphlet was published which defended the principles of the declaration;[1] wherein the author, who was a high church-man, endeavours to fine away the objections of its opponents. In one part[2] he says, "those recreations are the meetest to be used, which give the best refreshment to the bodie, and leave the least impression in the minde. In this respect, shooting, leaping, pitching the barre, stool-ball, and the like, are rather to be chosen than diceing or carding." This publication was immediately answered by the other party, who certainly had the best end of the argument, and were not sparing in their severity, but wounded the ordinance itself through the sides of its defender. The more precise writers objected not only to the profanation of the Sabbath, but to the celebration of most of the established festivals and holidays, as we find from the following verses:

> Their feastes, and all their holydayes they keep throughout the yeare,
> Are full of vile idolatry, and heathen like appeare.
> I shew not here their daunces yet with filthy gestures mad,
> Nor other wanton sports that on the holydayes are had.
> In some place solemne sights and showes, and pageants faire are play'd
> With sundry sorts of maskers brave, in straunge attire arrai'd.[3]

XXXIV.—ZEAL AGAINST WAKES AND MAY-GAMES.

But nothing seems to have excited their indignation more than the church-ales, wakes, and May-games. An author I have before me inveighs greatly against the erecting and decorating of the May-poles;[4] among others, he uses the following arguments: "Most of these May-poles are stollen; yet they give out that the poles are given to them; when, upon thorow examination, 'twill be found that most of them are stollen. There were two May-poles set up in my parish; the one was stollen, and the other was given by a profest papist. That which was

[1] Entitled A Treatise concerning the Sabbath, published A. D. 1636.
[2] Page 25. [3] The Pope's Kingdom, from Neogeorgus by Googe
[4] Thomas Hall, B. D. Pastor of King's Norton, in his pamphlet entitled Funebria Floræ; or, th Down-fall of May-Games; published 1660.

stollen was said to be given; when it was proved to their faces that it was stollen, and they made to acknowledge their offence: this pole was rated at five shillings. If all the poles, one with another, were so rated which were stollen this May, what a considerable summ it would amount to!" So much for his reasoning. He then attempts to be witty; and arraigns the goddess Flora at the bar: "Flora, hold up thy hand; thou art here indited by the name of Flora, of the city of Rome, in the county of Babylon, for that thou, contrary to the peace of our sovereign lord, his crown and dignity, hast brought in a pack of practical fanaticks; viz. ignorants, atheists, papists, drunkards, swearers, swash-bucklers, maid-marrions, morrice-dancers, maskers, mummers, May-pole stealers, health-drinkers, gamesters, lewd men, light women, contemners of magistrates, affronters of ministers, rebellious to masters, disobedient to parents, mispenders of time, and abusers of the creature, &c." This silly invective is concluded with a poem as dull and insipid as the prose; in which the May-pole is supposed to be addressing itself to one who is passing by it. The last lines run thus:

Now, traveller, learn more grace to shew
And see that thou thy betters know:
Thou hear'st what I say for myself,
I am no ape, I am no elf;
I am no base one's parasite;
I am the great world's favourite;
And, sith thou must now past me fro,
Let this my blessing with thee go:
There's not a knave in all the town,
Nor swearing courtier, nor base clown,
Nor dancing lob, nor mincing quean,
Nor popish clerk, be't priest or dean,
Nor knight debausht, nor gentleman
That follows drabs, or cup or cann,
That will give thee a friendly look
If thou a May-pole can'st not brook.

These zealous reformists have extended their censures to the church-men as well as to the laity; they accuse them with strengthening, by their example, the general depravation of manners and decay of religion: how far the charge was just, I cannot take upon me to answer. It is obvious enough that ignorant persons will not be induced to prize those qualifications very highly, which they who have the reputation of wisdom and learning neglect to appreciate as they ought to do.

XXXV.—DICE AND CARDS.

The Saxons and the Danes, as we have observed already,[1] were much addicted to gaming; and the same destructive propensity was equally prevalent among the Normans. The evil consequences arising from the indulgence of this pernicious pleasure have in all ages called loudly for reprehension, and demanded at last the more powerful interference of the legislature. The vice of gambling, however, is by no means peculiar to the people of this country: its influence is universally diffused among mankind; and in most nations the same strong measures that have been adopted here are found to be absolutely necessary to prevent its extension beyond the limits of subordination. Dice, and those games of chance dependent upon them, have been most generally decried; and cards, in latter times, are added to them as proper companions. Cards, when compared with dice, are indeed of modern invention, and originally, I doubt not, were productive only of innocent amusement; they were, however, soon converted into instruments of gambling equally dangerous as the dice themselves, and more enticing from the variety of changements they admit of, and the pleasing mixture of chance with skill, which often gives the tyro an advantage over the more experienced player; that is, supposing fair play on both sides; but woeful experience has convinced many that this is not always the case.

XXXVI.—REGULATION OF GAMES FOR MONEY, BY RICHARD CŒUR DE LION, &c.

Towards the close of the twelfth century, we meet with a very curious edict relative to gaming, and which shows how generally it even prevailed among the lower classes of the people at that period. This edict was established for the regulation of the Christian army under the command of Richard I. of England, and Philip of France, during the crusade in 1190: It prohibits any person in the army beneath the degree of a

[1] See p. xx.

knight from playing at any sort of game for money: knights and clergymen might play for money, but no one of them was permitted to lose more than twenty shillings in one whole day and night, under the penalty of one hundred shillings, to be paid to the archbishops in the army; the two monarchs had the privilege of playing for what they pleased; but their attendants were restricted to the sum of twenty shillings; and, if they exceeded, they were to be whipped naked through the army for three days.[1]

XXXVII.—STATUTES AGAINST DICE, CARDS, BALL-PLAY, &c.

The decrees established by the council held at Worcester, in the twenty-fourth year of Henry III. prohibited the clergy from playing at dice, or at chess:[2] but neither the one nor the other of these games are mentioned in the succeeding penal statutes, before the twelfth year of Richard II., when diceing is particularised, and expressly forbidden; though perhaps they were both of them included under the general title of games of chance, and dishonest games, mentioned in the proclamation of Edward III. which, with other pastimes therein specified, were generally practised to the great detriment of military exercises, and of archery in particular.

In the eleventh year of Henry VII. cards are first mentioned among the games prohibited by the law;[3] and at that time they seem to have been very generally used; for, the edict expressly forbids the practice of card-playing to apprentices, excepting the duration of the Christmas holidays, and then only in their

[1] Benedict. Abbas, Vit. Ric. I. edit. à Hearne, tom. ii. p. 610.

[2] The words in the original, as quoted by Du Cange, are these: "Nec ludant ad alea vel taxillos, nec sustineant ludos fieri de rege et regina," &c. The game of king and queen he conceives to have been some game with the cards; but most authors who have written upon the subject of playing cards, think that they were not known at that period, at least in this country: it is certain, however, that in the time of Elizabeth, the game of king and queen was understood to mean the playing with cards. "John Heywood, the great epigrammatist," according to Camden, "used to say he did not love to play at kinge and queene, but at Christmasse, according to the old order of Englande; that few men playyed at cardes but at Christmasse; and then almost all, men and boyes." Camden's Remains, p. 378. I have ventured to substitute chess for cards, in which game the two principal pieces are the king and the queen, and are so denominated in a MS. nearly coeval with the edict. See the account of this game in the body of the work.

[3] An. 11 Hen. VII. cap. 2.

masters' houses.[1] We learn from Stow, that these holidays extended "from All-Hallows evening to the day after Candlemas-day, when," says the historian, "there was, among other sports, playing at cards for counters, nailes, and points in every house, more for pastime than for gain."[2] The recreations prohibited by proclamation in the reign of Edward III., exclusive of the games of chance, are thus specified; throwing of stones,[3] wood, or iron; playing at hand-ball, foot-ball, club-ball, and cambucam, which I take to have been a species of goff, and probably received its name from the crooked bat with which it was played. These games, as before observed, were not forbidden from any particular evil tendency in themselves, but because they engrossed too much of the leisure and attention of the populace, and diverted their minds from the pursuits of a more martial nature. I should not forget to add, that "bull-baiting and cock-fighting" are included with "other dishonest games as trivial and useless." In[4] the reign of Edward IV. we find coits, closh or claish, kayles or nine-pins, half-bowl, hand-in and hand-out, with quick-borde, classed among the unlawful amusements;[5] which list was considerably augmented in the succeeding reigns, and especially in the eighteenth year of Henry VIII., when bowling, loggating, playing at tennice, dice, cards and tables, or back-gammon, were included.[6]

In the preamble to the Parliamentary Statutes as early as the sixth year of Edward III., there is a clause prohibiting of boys or others from playing at barres, or snatch-hood,[7] or any other improper games, in the king's palace at Westminster during the sitting of the parliament; neither might they, by striking, or otherwise, prevent any one from passing peaceably about his business.

[1] No householder might permit the games prohibited by the statute to be practised in their houses, excepting on the holidays, as before specified, under the penalty of six shillings and eight-pence for every offence.

[2] Survey of London, p. 79.

[3] Pilam manualem, pedinam, et bacculoream, et ad cambucam, &c.

[4] Rot. Claus. 39 Ed. III. m. 23.

[5] The magistrates are commanded to seize upon the said tables, dice, cards, boules, closhes, tennice-balls, &c. and to burn them.

[6] An. 17 Edw. II. cap. 3.

[7] Nul enfaunt ne autres jeur a barres, ne a autres jues nient convenebles come a oistre chaperon des gentz, ne a mettre en eux, &c. Rot. Parl. an. 6 Edw. III. Harl. MS. 7058.

XXXVIII.—PROHIBITIONS OF SKITTLE-PLAY.

In modern times, the penal laws have been multiplied, and much invigorated, in order to restrain the spirit of gambling; and in some measure they have had a salutary effect; but the evil is so fascinating and so general, that in all probability it will never be totally eradicated from the minds of the people. The frequent repetition and enforcement of the statutes in former times, proves that they were then, as they are now, inadequate to the suppression of gaming for a long continuance; and, when one pastime was prohibited, another was presently invented to supply its place. I remember, about twenty years back,[1] the magistrates caused all the skittle-frames in or about the city of London to be taken up, and prohibited the playing at dutch-pins, nine-pins, or in long bowling allies, when in many places the game of nine-holes was revived as a substitute, with the new name of Bubble the Justice, because the populace had taken it into their heads to imagine, that the power of the magistrates extended only to the prevention of such pastimes as were specified by name in the public acts, and not to any new species of diversion.

XXXIX.—ARCHERY SUCCEEDED BY BOWLING.

The general decay of those manly and spirited exercises, which formerly were practised in the vicinity of the metropolis has not arisen from any want of inclination in the people, but from the want of places proper for the purpose: such as in times past had been allotted to them are now covered with buildings, or shut up by enclosures, so that, if it were not for skittles, dutch-pins, four-corners, and the like pastimes, they would have no amusements for the exercise of the body; and these amusements are only to be met with in places belonging to common drinking-houses, for which reason their play is seldom productive of much benefit, but more frequently becomes the prelude to drunkenness and debauchery. This evil has

[1] [Before 1801.]

been increasing for a long series of years; and honest Stow laments the retrenchments of the grounds appropriated for martial pastimes which had begun to take place in his day. "Why," says he, "should I speak of the ancient exercises of the long bow, by the citizens of this city, now almost clean left off and forsaken? I over-pass it; for, by the means of closeing in of common grounds, our archers, for want of room to shoot abroad, creep into bowling-alleys and ordinarie diceing-houses neer home, where they have room enough to hazard their money at unlawful games."[1] Healso tells us, that "Northumberland house, in the parish of St. Katherine Coleman, belonging to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, in the thirty-third year of Henry the Sixth; but of late, being deserted by that noble family, the gardens were converted into bowling-alleys, and the other parts of the esiate into diceing houses. But bowling-alleys and houses for the exercise of diceing and other unlawful games are at this time so greatly increased in the other parts of the city and its suburbs, that this parent spot," or, as he afterwards calls it, "the ancient and only patron of misrule, is forsaken of its gamesters."[2] And nere we may add the following remark from an author somewhat more ancient than Stow:[3] "common bowling-alleyes are privy mothes that eat up the credit of many idle citizens, whose gaynes at home are not able to weigh downe theyr losses abroad; whose shoppes are so farre from maintaining their play, that theyr wives and children cry out for bread, and go to bedde supperlesse ofte in the yeere." In another place, his reflections are more general, and he exclaims, "Oh, what a wonderful change is this! our wreastling at armes is turned to wallowing in ladies' laps, our courage to cowardice, our running to royot, our bowes into bowls, and our darts into dishes."

XL.—MODERN GAMBLING.

The evils complained of by these writers were then in their infancy; they have in the present day attained to a gigantic

[1] Survey of London, p. 85.

[2] It was afterwards converted into small cottages, which were let, at large rents, to strangers and others. Ibid. p. 158.

[3] Stephen Gosson, in The School of Abuse, 1579.

stature; and we may add to them E. O. tables, as also other tables for gambling distinguished by the appellation of Rouge et Noir, Pharo-banks, and many more fashionable novelties, equally as detrimental to morality, and as equally destructive to the fortunes of those who pursue them, as any of the recreations of the former times. Even horse-racing, which anciently was considered as a liberal sport, and proper for the amusement of a gentleman, has been of late years degraded into a dangerous species of gambling, by no means the less deserving of censure, because it is fashionable and countenanced by persons of the highest rank and fortune. The good old Scotch poet little dreamed of such an innovation, when he lamented that horse-racing was falling into disrepute through the prevalency of games of chance. His words are these:

> Halking, hunting, and swift horse running
> Are changit all in wrangus, wynning;
> There is no play but cartes and dyce, &c.[1]

XLI.—LADIES' PASTIMES—NEEDLE-WORK.

It now remains to say a few words in a general way respecting the diversions of the English ladies. In the early ages, our fair countrywomen employed a large portion of their time in needlework and embroidery; and their acquirements in these elegant accomplishments most probably afforded them little leisure for the pursuits of trifling and useless amusements; but, though we are not acquainted with the nature of their recreations, there is no reason to suppose that they were unbecoming in themselves, or indulged beyond the bounds of reason or decorum. I have already, on a former occasion, particularly noticed the skilfulness of the Saxon and Norman ladies in handling the needle, embroidering, and working in tapestry; and that their performances were not only held in very high estimation at home, but were equally prized upon the continent, where none were produced that could be placed in competition with them.[2]

[1] That is, cards and dice; an old anonymous poem "of Covetice," cited by Warton, History of Poetry, vol. ii. p. 316.

[2] In the Manners and Customs of the English; the Chronicle of England; and more particularly in the View of the Dresses of the English; vol. i. p. 73, vol. ii. p. 140, &c.

XLII.—DANCING AND CHESS PLAY.

Dancing was certainly an ancient and favourite pastime with the women of this country: the maidens even in a state of servitude claimed, as it were by established privilege, the license to indulge themselves in this exercise on holidays and public festivals; when it was usually performed in the presence of their masters and mistresses.[1]

In the middle ages, dice, chess, and afterwards tables, and cards, with other sedentary games of chance and skill, were reckoned among the female amusements; and the ladies also frequently joined with the men in such pastimes, as we find it expressly declared in the metrical romance of Ipomydon. The passage alluded to runs thus:

> When they had dyned, as I you saye,
> Lordes and ladyes yede to to playe;
> Some to tables, and some to chesse,
> With other gamys more or lesse.[2]

In another poem, by Gower,[3] a lover asks his mistress, when she is tired of "dancing and caroling," if she was willing to "play at chesse, or on the dyes to cast a chaunce." Forrest, speaking in praise of Catharine of Arragon, first wife of Henry VIII., says, that when she was young,

> With stoole and with needyl she was not to seeke,
> And other practiseings for ladyes meete;
> To pastyme at tables, tick tacke or gleeke,
> Cardis and dyce—&c.[4]

XLIII.—LADIES' RECREATIONS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

The English ladies did not always confine themselves to domestic pastimes, they sometimes participated with the other sex in diversions of a more masculine nature; and engaged with them in the sports of the field. These violent exercises seem to have been rather unfashionable among them in the seventeenth century; for Burton, in his Anatomy of Melancholy, speaks of their pastimes as much better suited to the modesty and softness of the sex. "The women," says he, "instead of laborious studies, have curious needle-works, cutworks, spinning, bone-lace making, with other pretty devices to adorn

[1] See p. xxxv. [2] Harl. MS. 2252. [3] Confessio Amantis.
[4] Warton's History of English Poetry, vol. iii. p. 311.

houses, cushions, carpets, stool-seats," &c.[1] Not but some of these masculine females have occasionally made their appearance: and at the commencement of the last century, it should seem that they were more commonly seen than in Burton's time, which gave occasion for the following satirical paper in one of the Spectators,[2] written by Addison: "I have," says he, "very frequently the opportunity of seeing a rural Andromache, who came up to town last winter, and is one of the greatest fox-hunters in the country; she talks of hounds and horses, and makes nothing of leaping over a six-bar gate. If a man tells her a waggish story, she gives him a push with her hand in jest, and calls him an impudent dog; and, if her servant neglects his business, threatens to kick him out of the house. I have heard her in her wrath call a substantial tradesman a lousie cur; and I remember one day when she could not think of the name of a person, she described him, in a large company of men and ladies, by the fellow with the broad shoulders."

XLIV.—THE AUTHOR'S LABOURS—CHARACTER OF THE ENGRAVINGS.

Having laid before my readers a general view of the sports and pastimes of our ancestors, I shall proceed to arrange them under their proper heads, and allot to each of them a separate elucidation. The task in truth is extremely difficult; and many omissions, as well as many errors, must of necessity occur in the prosecution of it; but none, I hope, of any great magnitude, nor more than candour will overlook, especially when it is recollected, that in a variety of instances, I have been constrained to proceed without any guide, and explore, as it were, the recesses of a trackless wilderness. I must also entreat the reader to excuse the frequent quotations which he will meet with, which in general I have given verbatim; and this I have done for his satisfaction, as well as my own, judging it much fairer to stand upon the authority of others than to arrogate to myself the least degree of penetration to which I have no claim.

It is necessary to add, that the engravings, which constitute an essential part of this work, are not the produce of modern invention, neither do they contain a single figure that has not its proper authority. Most of the originals are exceedingly ancient,

[1] Part ii. sect. 2. cap. 4.

[2] No. 57, A. D. 1711.

and all the copies are faithfully made without the least unnecessary deviation. As specimens of the art of design they have nothing to recommend them to the modern eye, but as portraitures of the manners and usages of our ancestors, in times remote, they are exceedingly valuable, because they not only elucidate many obsolete customs, but lead to the explanation of several obscurities in the history of former ages.

January, 1801.

SPORTS AND PASTIMES

OF THE

PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

BOOK I.

RURAL EXERCISES PRACTISED BY PERSONS OF RANK.

CHAPTER I.

I. Hunting more ancient than Hawking.—II. State of Hunting among the Britons.—III. The Saxons expert in Hunting.—IV. The Danes also.—V. The Saxons subsequently;—The Normans.—VI. Their tyrannical Proceedings.—VII. Hunting and Hawking after the Conquest.—VIII. Laws relating to Hunting.—IX. Hunting and Hawking followed by the Clergy.—X. The Manner in which the dignified Clergy in the Middle Ages pursued these Pastimes.—XI. The English Ladies fond of these Sports.—XII. Privileges of the Citizens of London to Hunt;—Private Privileges for Hunting.—XIII. Two Treatises on Hunting considered.—XIV. Names of Beasts to be hunted.—XV. Wolves not all destroyed in Edgar's Time.—XVI. Dogs for Hunting.—XVII. Various Methods of Hunting.—XVIII. Terms used in Hunting;—Times when to hunt.

I.—HUNTING MORE ANCIENT THAN HAWKING.

We have several English treatises upon the subject of Hunting, but none of them very ancient; the earliest I have met with is a MS. in the Cotton Library at the British Museum,[1] written at the commencement of the fourteenth century. These compositions bear great resemblance to each other, and consist of general rules for the pursuit of game; together with the names and nature of the animals proper for hunting, and such other

[1] Vespasian, B. xii. There are also three copies of this MS. but more modern, in the Royal Library. [See sec. xiii. of the present chapter.]

matters as were necessary to be known by sportsmen. Hawking most commonly forms a part of these books; and, though this pastime can only be considered as a modern invention, when it is put in competition with that of hunting, yet it has obtained the precedency, notwithstanding the sanction of antiquity is so decidedly against it. I shall, however, in the following pages, revert the arrangement of those amusements, and begin with hunting, which naturally, in my opinion, claims the priority of place.

II.—HUNTING AMONG THE BRITONS.

Dio Nicæus, an ancient author, speaking of the inhabitants of the northern parts of this island, tells us, they were a fierce and barbarous people, who tilled no ground, but lived upon the depredations they committed in the southern districts, or upon the food they procured by hunting.[1] Strabo also says, that the dogs bred in Britain were highly esteemed upon the continent, on account of their excellent qualities for hunting; and these qualities, he seems to hint, were natural to them, and not the effect of tutorage by their foreign masters.[2] The information derived from the above-cited authors, does not amount to a proof that the practice of hunting was familiar with the Britons collectively; yet it certainly affords much fair argument in the support of such an opinion; for it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the pursuit of game should have been confined to the uncultivated northern freebooters, and totally neglected by the more civilised inhabitants of the southern parts of the island. We are well assured that venison constituted a great portion of their food,[3] and as they had in their possession such dogs as were naturally prone to the chase, there can be little doubt that they would exercise them for the purpose of procuring their favourite diet; besides, they kept large herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, both of which required protection from the wolves, and other ferocious animals, that infested the woods and coverts, and must frequently have rendered hunting an act of absolute necessity.

If it be granted that the Britons, generally speaking, were expert in hunting, it is still uncertain what animals were obnoxious to the chase; we know however, at least, that the hare was not anciently included; for Cæsar tells us, "the Britons did not eat the flesh of hares, notwithstanding the island abounded

[1] Dio Nicæus ex Xiphilin. [2] Lib. iv. [3] Cæsar Bel. Gal. lib. vi.

with them." And this abstinence, he adds, arose from a principle of religion;[1] which principle, no doubt, prevented them from being worried to death: a cruelty reserved for more enlightened ages.

We do not find, that, during the establishment of the Romans in Britain, there were any restrictive laws promulgated respecting the killing of game. It appears to have been an established maxim, in the early jurisprudence of that people, to invest the right of such things as had no master with those who were the first possessors. Wild beasts, birds, and fishes, became the property of those who first could take them. It is most probable that the Britons were left at liberty to exercise their ancient privileges; for, had any severity been exerted to prevent the destruction of game, such laws would hardly have been passed over without the slightest notice being taken of them by the ancient historians.

III.—HUNTING AMONG THE SAXONS.

The Germans, and other northern nations, were much more strongly attached to the sports of the field than the Romans, and accordingly they restricted the natural rights which the people claimed of hunting. The ancient privileges were gradually withdrawn from them, and appropriated by the chiefs and leaders to themselves; at last they became the sole prerogative of the crown, and were thence extended to the various ranks and dignities of the state at the royal pleasure.

As early as the ninth century, and probably long before that period, hunting constituted an essential part of the education of a young nobleman. Asser assures us, that Alfred the great, before he was twelve years of age, "was a most expert and active hunter, and excelled in all the branches of that most noble art, to which he applied with incessant labour and amazing success."[2] It is certain that, whenever a temporary peace gave leisure for relaxation, hunting was one of the most favourite pastimes followed by the nobility and persons of opulence at that period. It is no wonder, therefore, that dogs proper for the sport should be held in the highest estimation. When Athelstan, the grandson of Alfred, had obtained a signal victory at Brunanburgh over Constantine king of Wales, he imposed upon him a yearly tribute of gold, silver, and cattle; to which was also added a certain number of "hawks, and sharp-scented dogs, fit for

[1] Cæsar Bel. Gal. lib. vi. [2] Asser. in Vit. Ælfredi.

hunting of wild beasts."[1] His successor, Edgar, remitted the pecuniary payment on condition of receiving annually the skins of three hundred wolves.[2] We do not find, indeed, that the hawks and the hounds were included in this new stipulation; but it does not seem reasonable that Edgar, who, like his predecessor, was extremely fond of the sports of the field, should have given up that part of the tribute.

IV.—HUNTING AMONG THE DANES.

The Danes deriving their origin from the same source as the Saxons, differed little from them in their manners and habitudes, and perhaps not at all in their amusements; the propensity to hunting, however, was equally common to both. When Canute the Dane had obtained possession of the throne of England[1], he imposed several restrictions upon the pursuit of game, which were not only very severe, but seem to have been altogether unprecedented; and these may be deemed a sufficient proof of his strong attachment to this favourite pastime, for, in other respects, his edicts breathed an appearance of mildness and regard for the comforts of the people.

V.—HUNTING DURING THE RESTORATION OF THE SAXONS.

After the expulsion of the Danes, and during the short restoration of the Saxon monarchy, the sports of the field still maintained their ground. Edward the Confessor, whose disposition seems rather to have been suited to the cloister than to the throne, would join in no other secular amusements; but he took the greatest delight, says William of Malmsbury, "to follow a pack of swift hounds in pursuit of game, and to cheer them with his voice."[3] He was equally pleased with hawking, and every day, after divine service, he spent his time in one or other of these favourite pastimes.[4] Harold, who succeeded him, was so fond of his hawk and his hounds, that he rarely travelled without them. He is so represented upon the famous tapestry of Bayeux, with his hounds by his side and a hawk upon his hand, when brought before William duke of Normandy.[5] Travelling thus accompanied, was not a singular trait in the character of a nobleman at this period.

[1] Will. Malmsbury. Hist. Reg. Anglorum, lib. ii. cap. 6.
[2] Ibid. cap. 8. [3] Ibid. ut sup. cap. 13. [4] Ibid.
[5] Montfaucon Monarch. Fran. and Ducarel's Anglo-Norman Antiquities

1. Swine Hunting—IX. Century.

The above engraving represents a Saxon chieftain, attended by his huntsman and a couple of hounds, pursuing the wild swine in a forest, taken from a manuscriptal painting of the ninth century in the Cotton Library.[1]

2. Spearing a Boar—XIV. Century.

The above is a representation of the manner of attacking the wild boar, from a manuscript written about the commencemen of the fourteenth century, in the possession of Francis Douce, Esc

3. The Unearthing of a Fox.

The preceding engraving is from a manuscript in the Roya Library,[2] written about the same time as the latter.

[1] Tiberius, B. v. [2] No. 2, B. vii.

VI.—HUNTING AMONG THE NORMANS OPPRESSIVELY EXERCISED.

During the tyrannical government of William the Norman, and his two sons who succeeded him, the restrictions concerning the killing of game were by no means meliorated. The privileges of hunting in the royal forests were confined to the king and his favourites; and, to render these receptacles for the beasts of the chase more capacious, or to make new ones, whole villages were depopulated, and places of divine worship overthrown; not the least regard being paid to the miseries of the suffering inhabitants, or the cause of religion. These despotic proceedings were not confined to royalty, as may be proved from good authority. I need not mention the New Forest, in Hampshire, made by the elder William, or the park at Woodstock in Oxfordshire, seven miles in circumference, and walled round with stone by Henry his son.[1] This park, Stowe tells us, was the first made in England. The royal example was first followed by Henry earl of Warwick, who made a park at Wedgenoke, near Warwick, to preserve his deer and other animals for hunting; after this the practice of park-making became general among persons of opulence.

This subject is delineated, with great force of colouring, by John of Salisbury, a writer of the twelfth century, when the severity of the game laws was somewhat abated. "In our time," says the author, "hunting and hawking are esteemed the most honourable employments, and most excellent virtues, by our nobility; and they think it the height of worldly felicity to spend the whole of their time in these diversions; accordingly they prepare for them with more solicitude, expense, and parade, than they do for war; and pursue the wild beasts with greater fury than they do the enemies of their country. By constantly following this way of life, they lose much of their humanity, and become as savage, nearly, as the very brutes they hunt." He then proceeds in this manner: "Husbandmen, with their harmless herds and flocks, are driven from their well cultivated fields, their meadows, and their pastures, that wild beasts may range in them without interruption." He adds, addressing himself to his unfortunate countrymen, "If one of these great and merciless hunters shall pass by your habitation, bring forth hastily all the refreshment you have in your house, or that you can readily buy, or borrow from your neighbours; that you may

[1] Will. Malmsbury, lib. iv.

not be involved in ruin, or even accused of treason."[1] If this picture of Norman tyranny be correct, it exhibits a melancholy view of the sufferings to which the lower classes of the people were exposed; in short, it appears that these haughty Nimrods considered the murder of a man as a crime of less magnitude than the killing of a single beast appointed for the chase.

VII.—HUNTING AND HAWKING AFTER THE CONQUEST.

King John was particularly attached to the sports of the field; and his partiality for fine horses, hounds, and hawks, is evident, from his frequently receiving such animals, by way of payment, instead of money, for the renewal of grants, fines, and forfeitures, belonging to the crown.[2]

In the reign of Edward I. this favourite amusement was reduced to a perfect science, and regular rules established for its practice; these rules were afterwards extended by the master of the game belonging to king Henry IV. and drawn up for the use of his son, Henry prince of Wales. Both these tracts are preserved, and we shall have occasion to speak a little fuller concerning them in the course of this chapter.

Edward III. took so much delight in hunting, that even at the time he was engaged in war with France, and resident in that country, he had with him in his army sixty couple of stag hounds, and as many hare hounds,[3] and every day he amused himself with hunting or hawking.

It also appears that many of the great lords in the English army had their hounds and their hawks, as well as the king; to this may be added, from the same author, that is, Froissart, who was himself a witness to the fact, that Gaston earl of Foix, a foreign nobleman contemporary with king Edward, kept upwards of six hundred dogs in his castle for the purpose of hunting. He had four greyhounds called by the romantic names of Tristram, Hector, Brute, and Roland.[4]

James I. preferred the amusement of hunting to hawking or shooting. It is said of this monarch that he divided his time betwixt his standish, his bottel, and his hunting; the last had his fair weather, the two former his dull and cloudy.[5] One

[1] Johan. Sarisburiensis de Nugis Curialium, lib. i. cap. 4.
[2] Blount's Ancient Tenures, p. 135.
" Fort chiens et chiens de levries," Froissart. Chron. vol. i. cap. 210.
[4] Froissart, vol. iv. [5] Wellwood's Memoirs, p 83.

time when he was on a hunting party near Bury St. Edmunds he saw an opulent townsman, who had joined the chase, "very brave in his apparel, and so glittering and radiant, that he eclipsed all the court." The king was desirous of knowing the name of this gay gentleman, and being informed by one of his followers, that it was Lamme, he facetiously replied, "Lamb, call you him? I know not what kind of lamb he is, but I am sure he has got a fleece upon his back."[1] Thus it seems that even the puns of royalty are worthy of record.

It would be an endless, as well as a needless task, to quote all the passages that occur in the poetical and prose writings of the last three centuries, to prove that this favourite pastime had lost nothing of its relish in the modern times; on the contrary, it seems to have been more generally practised. Sir Thomas More, who wrote in the reign of Henry VIII., describing the state of manhood, makes a young gallant to say,

> Man-hod I am, therefore I me delyght
> To hunt and hawke, to nourishe up and fede
> The greyhounde to the course, the hawke to th' flight,
> And to bestryde a good and lusty stede.[2]

These pursuits are said by latter writers to have been destructive to the fortunes of many inconsiderate young heirs, who, desirous of emulating the state of their superiors, have kept their horses, hounds, and hawks, and flourished away for a short time, in a style that their income was inadequate to support. Others again, not having it in their power to proceed so far, contented themselves more prudently with joining the parties that were hunting, and partook with them the pleasure of following the game.

VIII.—LAWS RELATING TO HUNTING.

Laws for punishing such as hunted, or destroyed the game, in the royal forests, and other precincts belonging to the crown, were, as we have just hinted above, established with unprecedented severity by Canute the Dane, when he ascended the throne of England. By these edicts the great thanes, bishops, and abbots, were permitted to hunt in the king's chases: but all unqualified persons were subjected to very heavy fines, not only

[1] Harl. MS. No. 6395, anonymous, entitled "Merry Passages and Jeasts."
[2] Sir Thomas More's Poems. See also Warton's History of English Poetry, 4to vol. iii. p. 101.

for hunting, but even for disturbing of the game. If a gentleman, or an inferior thane, killed a stag in the king's forests, he was degraded from his rank; if a ceorl, or husbandman, committed the same offence, he was reduced to slavery; and if a slave killed one, he suffered death. Magistrates were appointed, in every county, or shire, to put these laws in execution, and under them were appointed inferior officers or gamekeepers, whose province it was to apprehend the offenders.[1] By another law enacted by the same monarch, every proprietor of land had the privilege to hunt game within his own fields and woods; but might not pursue them into the royal forests.[2] This prince also prohibited the exercise of hunting, or hawking, upon the sabbath day.[3]

The severity of the game laws was rather increased, than abated, under the governance of the four first Norman monarchs. Henry II. is said to have relaxed their efficacy; rather, I presume, by not commanding them to be enforced with rigour, than by causing them to be abrogated; for they seem to have virtually existed in the reign of king John; and occasioned the clause in the Forest Charter, insisting that no man should forfeit his life, or his limbs, for killing the king's deer;—but, if he was taken in the fact of stealing venison belonging to the king, he should be subjected to a heavy fine; and, in default of payment, be imprisoned for one year and one day; and after the expiration of that time, find surety for his good behaviour, or be banished the land.[4] This charter was afterwards confirmed by his son Henry III. and the succeeding monarchs.

IX.—HUNTING BY THE CLERGY.

Another clause in the same charter grants to an archbishop, bishop, earl, or baron, when travelling through the royal forests, at the king's command, the privilege to kill one deer or two in the sight of the forester, if he was at hand; if not, they were commanded to cause a horn to be sounded,[5] that it might not appear as if they had intended to steal the game.

It is evident that this privilege was afterwards construed into a permission for the personages named therein to hunt in the

[1] Constitut. Cnut. Reg. de Forest. apud Spelm. Gloss. et Wilkius, Leg. Sax. p. 146
[2] Leges Cnuti, apud Lambard, cap. 77.
[3] Ibid. cap. 15.
[4] Carta de Foresta, cap. 11.
[5] Faciat cornare, ibid. cap. 17.

royal chases; but the words of the charter are not to that amount, and ought, says Spelman, to be taken literally as they stand in the translation: they could not however, at any rate, adds he, mean, "that the ecclesiastics are to hunt the deer themselves, for they suppose them to be no hunters, as the earls and barons might be; and therefore it is not said, that he who claims the venison shall blow the horn, but only that he shall cause it to be sounded."[1]

The propensity of the clergy to follow the secular pastimes, and especially those of hunting and hawking, is frequently reprobated by the poets and moralists of the former times. Chaucer, in his Canterbury Tales, makes the monk much better skilled in riding and hunting, than in divinity. The same poet, afterwards, in the Ploughman's Tale, takes occasion to accuse the monks of pride, because they rode on coursers like knights, having their hawks and hounds with them. In the same tale he severely reproaches the priests for their dissolute manners, saying, that many of them thought more upon hunting with their dogs, and blowing the horn, than of the service they owed to God.[2]

The prevalence of these excesses occasioned the restrictions, contained in an edict established in the thirteenth year of Richard II. which prohibits any priest, or other clerk, not possessed of a benefice to the yearly amount of ten pounds, from keeping a greyhound, or any other dog for the purpose of hunting; neither might they use ferrits, hayes, nets, hare-pipes, cords, or other engines to take or destroy the deer, hares, or rabbits, under the penalty of one year's imprisonment.[3] The dignified clergy were not affected by this statute, but retained their ancient privileges, which appear to have been very extensive. By the game laws of Canute the Dane they were permitted to hunt in the forests belonging to the crown; and these prerogatives were not abrogated by the Normans. Henry II., displeased at the power and ambition of the ecclesiastics, endeavoured to render these grants of none effect; not by publicly annulling them, but by putting in force the canon law, which strictly forbade the clergy to spend their time in hunting and hawking: and for this purpose, having obtained permission from Hugo

[1] Spelman's Answer to the Apology for Archbishop Abbot.

[2] Canterbury Tales by Chaucer. Numerous quotations might be made from other writers in addition to those above; but they are sufficient for my purpose.

[3] Stat. 13 Rich. II.

Pertroleonis, the Pope's legate, he caused a law to be made, authorising him to convene the offenders before the secular judges, and there to punish them.[1] The establishment of this edict was probably more to show his power, than really to restrain them from hunting.

X.—HUNTING AND HAWKING IN THE MIDDLE AGES BY BISHOPS, &c.

The bishops and abbots of the middle ages hunted with great state, having a large train of retainers and servants; and some of them are recorded for their skill in this fashionable pursuit. Walter bishop of Rochester, who lived in the thirteenth century, was an excellent hunter, and so fond of the sport, that at the age of fourscore he made hunting his sole employment, to the total neglect of the duties of his office.[2] In the succeeding century an abbot of Leicester surpassed all the sportsmen of the time in the art of hare hunting;[3] and even when these dignitaries were travelling from place to place, upon affairs of business, they usually had both hounds and hawks in their train. Fitzstephen assures us, that Thomas à Becket, being sent as ambassador from Henry II. to the court of France, assumed the state of a secular potentate; and took with him dogs and hawks of various sorts, such as were used by kings and princes.[4]

The clergy of rank, at all times, had the privilege of hunting in their own parks and inclosures; and therefore, that they might not be prevented from following this favourite pastime, they took care to have such receptacles for game belonging to their priories. At the time of the Reformation, the see of Norwich, only, was in the possession of no less than thirteen parks, well stocked with deer and other animals for the chase.[5] At the end of a book of Homilies in MS., in the Cotton Library,[6] written about the reign of Henry VI., is a poem containing instructions to priests in general, and requiring them, among other things, not to engage in "hawkynge, huntynge, and dawnsynge."

XI.—HUNTING AND HAWKING BY LADIES.

The ladies often accompanied the gentlemen in hunting parties; upon these occasions it was usual to draw the game into a

[1] An. 21 Hen. II. A. D. 1157. See Spelman's Answer to the Apology for Archbishop Abbot.
[2] P. Blesens. epist. lvi. p. 81
[3] Knyghton, apud Decem Script. p. 263.
[4] Stephanid. vit. S. Thom.
[5] Vide Spelman ut supra.
[6] Claudius, A. 2.

small compass by means of inclosures, and temporary stands were made for them to be spectators of the sport; though in many instances they joined in it, and shot at the animals as they passed by them, with arrows. Agreeable to these manners, which custom reconciled to the fair sex, most of the heroines of romance are said to be fond of the sports of the field. In an old poem entitled the "Squyer of lowe degre,"[1] the king of Hungary promises his daughter that in the morning she shall go with him on a hunting party, arrayed most gorgeously and riding in a chariot covered with red velvet, drawn by

> Jennettes of Spayne that ben so white,
> Trapped to the ground with velvet bright.

In the field, says he, the game shall be inclosed with nets, and you placed at a stand so conveniently that the harts and the hinds shall come close to you—

> Ye shall be set at such a tryst,
> That hert and hynde shall come to your fyst.

He then commends the music of the bugle-horn—

> To here the bugles there yblow
> With theyr bugles in that place,
> And seven score raches at his rechase

He also assures her that she should have—

> A lese of herhounds with her to strake.

The harehound, or greyhound, was considered as a very valuable present in former times,[2] and especially among the ladies, with whom it appears to have been a peculiar favourite; and therefore in another metrical romance, probably more ancient than the former, called "Sir Eglamore,"[3] a princess tells the knight, that if he was inclined to hunt, she would, as an especial mark of her favour, give him an excellent greyhound, so swift that no deer could escape from his pursuit—

[1] Garrick's Collection of Old Plays, K. vol. ix.

[2] The following extracts prove king John to have been exceedingly partial to this kind of dogs. Rot. Pip. iv. Reg. Johan. A. D. 1203. Rog. coustab. Cestriæ debet D marcas et X palfridos et X laissas Leporariorum, &c. that is, five hundred marks, ten horses, and ten leashes of greyhounds.—An. xi. Johan. 1210. Rog. de Mallvell redd. comp. de 1 palfrido velociter currente et 2 laissiis Leporariorum, one swift running horse, and six greyhounds.

[3] Garrick's Collec. K. vol. x.

Syr yf you be on huntynge founde,
I shall you gyve a good greyhounde
That is dunne as a doo:
For as I am trewe gentylwoman,
There was never deer that he at ran,
That myght yscape him fro.

It is evident, however, that the ladies had hunting parties by themselves.

4. Ladies Hunting—XIV. Century

We find them, according to this representation, in the open fields winding the horn, rousing the game, and pursuing it, without any other assistance: this delineation, which is by no

means singular, is taken from a manuscript in the Royal Library, written and illuminated early in the fourteenth century.[1] We may also observe, that, upon these occasions, the female Nimrods dispensed with the method of riding best suited to the modesty of the sex, and sat astride on the saddle like the men; but this indecorous custom, I trust, was never general, nor of long continuance, even with the heroines who were most delighted with these masculine exercises. An author of the seventeenth century speaks of another fashion, adopted by the fair huntresses of the town of Bury in Suffolk. "The Bury ladies," says he, "that used hawking and hunting, were once in a great vaine of wearing breeches," which it seems gave rise to many severe and ludicrous sarcasms. The only argument in favour of this habit, was decency in case of an accident. But it was observed that such accidents ought to be prevented, in a manner more consistent with the delicacy of the sex, that is, by refraining from those dangerous recreations.[2]

Queen Elizabeth was extremely fond of the chase, and the nobility who entertained her in her different progresses, made large hunting parties, which she usually joined when the weather was favourable. She very frequently indulged herself in following of the hounds. "Her majesty," says a courtier, writing to Sir Robert Sidney, "is well and excellently disposed to hunting, for every second day she is on horseback and continues the sport long."[3] At this time her majesty had just entered the seventy-seventh year of her age, and she was then at her palace at Oatlands. Often, when she was not disposed to hunt herself, she was entertained with the sight of the pastime. At Cowdrey, in Sussex, the seat of lord Montecute, A. D. 1591, one day after dinner her grace saw from a turret, "sixteen bucks all having fayre lawe, pulled downe with greyhounds in a laund or lawn."[4]

The hunting dresses, as they appeared at the commencement of the fifteenth century, are given from a manuscript of that time, in the Harleian Collection.[5]

[1] 2. B. vii. [In the original drawing, and on Mr. Strutt's plate, the figures pursuing and pursued are in a line together: but for the purpose of including all the figures within the preceding page, the lady on horseback is placed above, instead of behind the female archer.]

[2] MS. Harl. 6395. Merry Passages and Jeasts, art. 345.

[3] Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney, dated September 12, A.D. 1600.

[4] Nichols's Progresses, vol. ii.

[5] No. 4431.

5. Hunting Dresses.—XV. Century.

XII.—PRIVILEGES OF THE CITIZENS OF LONDON TO HUNT AND HAWK.

The citizens of London were permitted to hunt and hawk in certain districts. And one of the clauses, in the royal charter granted to them by Henry I., runs to this purport: "The citizens of London may have chases, and hunt as well, and as fully, as their ancestors have had; that is to say, in the Chiltre, in Middlesex, and Surry."[1] Hence we find, that these privileges were of ancient standing. They were also confirmed by the succeeding charters. Fitzstephen, who wrote towards the close of the reign of Henry II., says, that the Londoners delight themselves with hawks and hounds, for they have the liberty of hunting in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, all Chilton, and in Kent to the waters of Grey,[2] which differs somewhat from the statement in the charter. These exercises were not much followed by the citizens of London at the close of the sixteenth century, not for want of taste

[1] Maitland's Hist. London, book i. chap. 6.
[2] Stephanides Descript. London.

for the amusement, says Stow but for leisure to pursue it.[1] Strype, however, so late as the reign of George I., reckons among the modern amusements of the Londoners, "Riding on horseback and hunting with my Lord Mayor's hounds, when the common-hunt goes out."

This common-hunt of the citizens is ridiculed in an old ballad called the "London Customs," published in D'Urfey's Collection,[2] I shall select the three following stanzas only.

Next once a year into Essex a hunting they go;
To see 'em pass along, O 'tis a most pretty shew:
Through Cheapside and Fenchurch-street, and so to Aldgate pump,
Each man with 's spurs in's horses sides, and his back-sword cross his rump.

My lord he takes a staff in hand to beat the bushes o'er;
I must confess it was a work he ne'er had done before.
A creature bounceth from a bush, which made them all to laugh;
My lord, he cried, a hare a hare, but it prov'd an Essex calf.

And when they had done their sport, they came to London where they dwell,
Their faces all so torn and scratch'd, their wives scarce knew them well;
For 'twas a very great mercy, so many 'scap'd alive,
For of twenty saddles carried out, they brought again but five.

Privileges to hunt in certain districts, were frequently granted to individuals either from favour, or as a reward for their services. Richard I. gave to Henry de Grey, of Codnor, the manor of Turroe, in Essex, with permission to hunt the hare and the fox, in any lands belonging to the crown, excepting only the king's own demesne parks; and this special mark of the royal favour was confirmed by his brother John, when he succeeded to the throne.[3]

Others obtained grants of land, on condition of their paying an annual tribute in horses, hawks, and hounds. And here I cannot help noticing a curious tenure, by which Bertram de Criol held the manor of Setene, or Seaton, in Kent, from Edward I.; he was to provide a man, called "veltarius," or huntsman,[4] to lead three greyhounds when the king went into Gascony, so long as a pair of shoes, valued at fourpence, should last him.[5]

[1] Stow's Survey of London, vol. i. p. 157.
[2] "Pills to Purge Melancholy," 1719, vol. iv. p. 42.
[3] Blount's Ancient Tenures.
[4] Or "vautrarius," which Blount derives from the French vaultre, a mongrel hound, and supposes the name to signify an inferior huntsman; and this opinion I have adopted.
[5] E c. An. 34 Edward I. No. 37. Richard Rockesley held the same land by the same tenure, in the second year of Edward II. Blount ut supra.

XIII.—TWO EARLY TREATISES ON HUNTING.

I have mentioned two treatises upon hunting, in a former part (the first section) of this chapter; the earliest of them was originally written in French, by William Twici, or Twety, grand huntsman to king Edward II.[1] I have never seen the French tract, but the manuscript I spoke of is in English, and from its appearance nearly coeval with the original, but the name of John Gyfford is joined to that of Twety, and both of them are said to be "maisters of the game" to king Edward,[2] and to have composed this treatise upon "the crafte of huntynge." The other, as before observed, was written by the master of the game to Henry IV. for the use of prince Henry his son, and is little more than an enlargement of the former tract.[3] The Book of St. Albans, so called because it was printed there, contains the first treatise upon the subject of hunting that ever appeared from the press. It is however evidently compiled from the two tracts above mentioned, notwithstanding the legendary authority of Sir Tristram, quoted in the beginning. The Book of St. Albans is said to have been written by Juliana Barnes, or Berners, the sister of lord Berners, and prioress of the nunnery of Sopewell, about the year 1481, and was printed soon afterwards. This book contains two other tracts, the one on hawking, and the other on heraldry. It has been reprinted several times, and under different titles, with some additions and amendments, but the general information is the same.

XIV.—NAMES OF BEASTS OF SPORT.

Twici introduces the subject with a kind of poetical prologue, in which he gives us the names of the animals to be pursued; and these are divided into three classes.

The first class contains four, which, we are informed, may be properly called beasts for hunting; namely, the hare, the hart, the wolf, and the wild boar.[4]

The second class contains the names of the beasts of the chase,

[1] Entitled "Art de Venerie le quel Maistre Guillame Twici venour le Roy dangleterre fist en son temps per aprandre Autres; or the Art of Hunting, which Mr. Wm. Twici, huntsman to the king of England, made for the instruction of others." See Warton's Hist. Eng. Poetry, vol. ii. p. 221.

[2] Cotton MS. Vespasian, B. xii.

[3] MS. Harl. This book is entitled "The Maister of the Game."

[4] The Book of St. Albans, I fancy, by mistake, places the wild roe for the wild boar.

and they are five; that is to say, the buck, the doe, the fox, the martin, and the roe.[1]

In the third class we find three, that are said to afford "greate dysporte" in the pursuit, and they are denominated, the grey or badger, the wild-cat and the otter.

Most of the books upon hunting agree in the number and names of the first class; but respecting the second and third they are not so clear. The beasts of the chase in some are more multifarious, and divided into two classes: the first called beasts of sweet flight, are the buck, the doe, the bear, the rein deer, the elk, and the spytard, which, as the author himself informs us, is a hart one hundred years old. In the second class, are placed the fulimart, the fitchat, or fitch, the cat, the grey, the fox, the wesel, the martin, the squirrel, the white rat, the otter, the stoat, and the pole-cat; and these are said to be beasts of stinking flight.[2]

XV.—WOLVES.

The reader may possibly be surprised, when he casts his eye over the foregoing list of animals for hunting, at seeing the names of several that do not exist at this time in England, and especially of the wolf, because he will readily recollect the story so commonly told of their destruction during the reign of Edgar. It is generally admitted that Edgar gave up the fine of gold and silver imposed by his uncle Athelstan, upon Constantine the king of Wales, and claimed in its stead the annual production of three hundred wolves' skins; because, say the historians, the extensive woodlands and coverts, abounding at that time in Britain, afforded shelter for the wolves, which were exceedingly numerous, and especially in the districts bordering upon Wales. By this prudent expedient, add they, in less than four years the whole island was cleared from those ferocious animals, without putting his subjects to the least expense; but, if this record be taken in its full latitude, and the supposition established, that the wolves were totally exterminated in Britain during the reign of Edgar, more will certainly be admitted

[1] The Book of St. Albans adds, that all other kinds of beasts subject to hunting are to be called "Raskall," derived, I suppose, from the Saxon word papcal, which signifies a lean beast, or one of no worth.

[2] The word in the original MS. is written fute and fuite, which I conceive to be French, and then the interpretation I have given of flight will be proper. The meaning is, that the latter leave a scent behind them when they are chased.

than is consistent with the truth, as certain documents clearly prove.

The words of William of Malmsbury relative to wolves in Edgar's time are to this purport. "He, Edgar, imposed a tribute upon the king of Wales exacting yearly three hundred wolves. This tribute continued to be paid for three years, but ceased upon the fourth, because *nullum se ulterius posse invenire profess*us; it was said that he could not find any more;"[1] that is, in Wales, for it can hardly be supposed that he was permitted to hunt them out of his own dominions.

As respects the existence of wolves in England afterwards, and till a much later period; it appears, that in the tenth year of William I. Robert de Umfranville, knight, held the lordship, &c. of Riddlesdale, in the county of Northumberland, by service of defending that part of the country from enemies and "wolves."[2] Also in the forty-third year of Edward III. Thomas Engaine held lands in Pitchley, in the county of Northampton, by service of finding at his own cost certain dogs for the destruction of wolves, foxes, &c. in the counties of Northampton, Rutland, Oxford, Essex, and Buckingham.[3] As late as the eleventh year of Henry VI. Sir Robert Plumpton held one bovate of land, in the county of Nottingham, called Wolf hunt land, by service of winding a horn, and chasing or frighting the wolves in the forest of Shirewood.[4]

XVI.—DOGS OF THE CHASE.

In the manuscripts before mentioned we find the following names for the dogs employed in the sports of the field; that is to say, raches, or hounds; running hounds, or harriers, to chase hares; and greyhounds, which were favourite dogs with the sportsmen; alauntes, or bull-dogs, these were chiefly used for hunting the boar; the mastiff is also said to be "a good hounde" for hunting the wild boar; the spaniel was of use in hawking; "hys crafte," says the author, "is for the perdrich or patridge, and the quaile; and, when taught to couch, he is very serviceable to the fowlers, who take those birds with nets." There must, I presume, have been a vast number of other kinds of dogs known in England at this period; these, however, are all that the early writers, upon the subject of hunting, have thought

[1] Hist. Reg. Angl. lib. ii. cap. 8. [3] Testa Nevelli.
[2] Memb. 13. [4] Ibid. See more in Blount's Ancient Tenures.

proper to enumerate. In the sixteenth century the list is enlarged; besides those already named, we find bastards and mongrels, lemors, kenets, terrours, butcher's hounds, dunghill dogs, trindel-tail'd dogs, "pryckereard" curs, and ladies small puppies.[1]

There formerly existed a very cruel law, which subjected all the dogs that were found in the royal chases and forests, excepting such as belonged to privileged persons, to be maimed by having the left claw cut from their feet, unless they were redeemed by a fine; this law probably originated with the Normans, and certainly was in force in the reign of Henry I.[2]

XVII.—DIFFERENT MODES OF HUNTING.

Several methods of hunting were practised by the sportsmen of this kingdom, as well on horseback as on foot. Sometimes this exercise took place in the open country; sometimes in woods and thickets; and sometimes in parks, chases, and forests, where the game was usually enclosed with a haye or fence-work of netting, supported by posts driven into the ground for that purpose. The manner of hunting at large needs no description; but, as the method of killing game within the enclosures is now totally laid aside, it may not be amiss to give the reader some idea how it was performed, and particularly when the king with the nobility were present at the sport. All the preparations and ceremonies necessary upon the occasion are set down at large in the manuscript made for the use of prince Henry, mentioned before;[3] the substance of which is as follows.

When the king should think proper to hunt the hart in the parks or forests, either with bows or greyhounds, the master of the game, and the park-keeper, or the forester, being made acquainted with his pleasure, was to see that every thing be provided necessary for the purpose. It was the duty of the sheriff of the county, wherein the hunting was to be performed, to furnish fit stabling for the king's horses, and carts to take away the dead game. The hunters and officers under the forester, with their assistants, were commanded to erect a sufficient number of temporary buildings[4] for the reception of the royal family and their train;

[1] "Booke of hauking and hunting," without date, reprinted with the title of 'A Jewell for Gentrie.' Lond. 1614.

[2] See Blount's Antient Tenures, art. Sutton, &c. [3] Page 17, sec. xiii.

[4] They are called "trists" or "trettes" in the MS. and might possibly be temporary stages.

and, if I understand my author clearly, these buildings were directed to be covered with green boughs,[1] to answer the double purpose of shading the company and the hounds from the heat of the sun, and to protect them from any inconveniency in case of foul weather. Early in the morning, upon the day appointed for the sport, the master of the game, with the officers deputed by him, was to see that the greyhounds were properly placed, and the person nominated to blow the horn, whose office was to watch what kind of game was turned out, and, by the manner of winding his horn, signify the same to the company, that they might be prepared for its reception upon its quitting the cover. Proper persons were then to be appointed, at different parts of the enclosure, to keep the populace at due distance. The yeomen of the king's bow, and the grooms of his tutored greyhounds,[2] had in charge to secure the king's standing, and prevent any noise being made to disturb the game before the arrival of his majesty. When the royal family and the nobility were conducted to the places appointed for their reception, the master of the game, or his lieutenant, sounded three long mootes, or blasts with the horn, for the uncoupling of the hart hounds. The game was then driven from the cover, and turned by the huntsmen and the hounds so as to pass by the stands belonging to the king and queen, and such of the nobility as were permitted to have a share in the pastime; who might either shoot at them with their bows, or pursue them with the greyhounds, at their pleasure. We are then informed that the game which the king, the queen, or the prince or princesses, slew with their own bows, or particularly commanded to be let run, was not liable to any claim by the huntsmen or their attendants; but of all the rest that was killed they had certain parts assigned to them by the master of the game, according to the ancient custom.

This arrangement was for a royal hunting, but similar preparations were made upon like occasions for the sport of the great barons and dignified clergy. Their tenants sometimes held lands of them by the service of finding men to enclose the grounds, and drive the deer to the stands whenever it pleased their lords to hunt them.[3]

[1] The passage runs thus in the MS. "the fewtrerers ought to make fayre logges of grene boughes at their trestes," &c.

[2] Chastised greyhoundes, MS.

[3] See Blount's Ancient Tenures.

XVIII.—HUNTING TERMS—SEASONS FOR HUNTING.

There was a peculiar kind of language invented by the sportsmen of the middle ages, which it was necessary for every lover of the chase to be acquainted with.

When beasts went together in companies, there was said to be a pride of lions; a lepe of leopards; an herd of harts, of bucks, and of all sorts of deer; a bevy of roes; a sloth of bears; a singular of boars; a sownder of wild swine; a dryft of tame swine; a route of wolves; a harras of horses; a rag of colts; a stud of mares; a pace of asses; a baren of mules; a team of oxen; a drove of kine; a flock of sheep; a tribe of goats; a sculk of foxes; a cete of badgers; a richess of martins; a fesynes of ferrets; a huske or a down of hares; a nest of rabbits; a clowder of cats, and a kendel of young cats; a shrewdness of apes; and a labour of moles.

And also, of animals when they retired to rest; a hart was said to be harbored, a buck lodged, a roebuck bedded, a hare formed, a rabbit set, &c.

Two greyhounds were called a brace, three a leash, but two spaniels or harriers were called a couple. We have also a mute of hounds for a number, a kenel of raches, a litter of whelps, and a cowardice of curs.

It is well worthy notice, that this sort of phraseology was not confined to birds and beasts, and other parts of the brute creation, but it was extended to the various ranks and professions of men, as the specimen, which I cannot help adding, will sufficiently demonstrate; the application of some of them, will, I trust, be thought apt enough:—

A state of princes; a skulk of friars; a skulk of thieves; an observance of hermits; a lying of pardoners; a subtiltie of serjeants; an untruth of sompners; a multiplying of husbands; an incredibility of cuckolds; a safeguard of porters; a stalk of foresters; a blast of hunters; a draught of butlers; a temperance of cooks; a melody of harpers; a poverty of pipers; a drunkenship of coblers; a disguising of taylors; a wandering of tinkers; a malepertness of pedlars; a fighting of beggars; a rayful, (that is, a netful,) of knaves; a blush of boys; a bevy of ladies; a nonpatience of wives; a gagle of women; a gagle of geese; a superfluity of nuns; and a herd of harlots. Similar terms were

applied to inanimate things, as a caste of bread, a cluster of grapes, a cluster of nuts, &c.

I shall now conclude this long, and, I fear, tedious chapter with "the seasons for alle sortes of venery;" and the ancient books upon hunting, seem to be agreed upon this point.

The "time of grace" begins at Midsummer, and lasteth to Holyrood-day. The fox may be hunted from the Nativity to the Annunciation of our Lady;[1] the roebuck from Easter to Michaelmas; the roe from Michaelmas to Candlemas; the hare from Michaelmas to Midsummer; the wolf as the fox; and the boar from the Nativity to the Purification of our Lady

[1] See the Encyclopedia Britannica, art. Hunting.

CHAPTER II.

I. Hawking practised by the Nobility.—II. Its Origin not well known;—A favourite Amusement with the Saxons.—III. Romantic Story relative to Hawking.—IV. Grand Falconer of France, his State and Privileges.—V. Edward III. partial to Hawking;—Sir Thomas Jermin.—VI. Ladies fond of Hawking.—VII. Its Decline.—VIII. How it was performed.—IX. Embellishments of the Hawk.—X. Treatises concerning Hawking;—Superstitious Cure of Hawks.—XI. Laws respecting Hawks.—XII. Their great Value.—XIII. The different Species of Hawks, and their Appropriation.—XIV. Terms used in Hawking.—XV. Fowling and Fishing;—The Stalking Horse;—Lowbelling.

I.—HAWKING BY THE NOBILITY.

HAWKING, or the art of training and flying of hawks, for the purpose of catching other birds, is very frequently called falconry or fauconry; and the person who had the care of the hawks is denominated the falconer, but never I believe the hawker. The sport is generally placed at the head of those amusements that can only be practised in the country, and probably it obtained this precedency from its being a pastime so generally followed by the nobility, not in this country only, but also upon the continent. Persons of high rank rarely appeared without their dogs and their hawks; the latter they carried with them when they journeyed from one country to another,[1] and sometimes even when they went to battle, and would not part with them to procure their own liberty when taken prisoners. Sometimes they formed part of the train of an ecclesiastic.[2] These birds were considered as ensigns of nobility: and no action could be reckoned more dishonourable to a man of rank than to give up his hawk.[3] The ancient English illuminators have uniformly distinguished the portrait of king Stephen by giving him a hawk upon his hand, to signify, I presume, by that symbol, that he was nobly, though not royally born.[4]

Sebastian Brant, a native of Germany, the author of a work entitled Stultifera Navis, the Ship of Fools, published towards

[1] See p. 4. sec. v.
[2] See p. 11. sec. x.
[3] Memoirs des Inscrip. tom. ix. p. 542.
[4] See the Regal and Ecclesiastical Antiquities of England.

the conclusion of the fifteenth century, accuses his countrymen of bringing their hawks and hounds into the churches, and interrupting the divine service; which indecency he severely reprobates and with the greatest justice. The passage is thus translated by Alexander Barclay:[1]

> Into the church then comes another sotte,
> Withouten devotion, jetting up and down,
> Or to be seene, and showe his garded cote.
> Another on his fiste a sparhawke or fawcone,
> Or else a cokow; wasting so his shone;
> Before the aulter he to and fro doth wander,
> With even as great devotion as doth a gander.
> In comes another, his houndes at his tayle,
> With lynes and leases, and other like baggage;
> His dogges barke, so that withouten fayle,
> The whole church is troubled by their outrage.

II.—ORIGIN OF HAWKING.

I cannot trace the origin of hawking to an earlier period than the middle of the fourth century. Julius Firmicus, who lived about that time, is the first Latin author that speaks of falconers, and the art of teaching one species of birds to fly after and catch others.[2] Pliny is thought to have attributed a sport of this kind to the inhabitants of a certain district in Thrace, but his words are too obscure for much dependance to be placed upon them.[3] An English writer, upon what authority I know not, says, that hawking was first invented and practised by Frederic Barbarossa, when he besieged Rome.[4] It appears, however, to be very certain that this amusement was discovered abroad, where it became fashionable, some time before it was known in this country: the period of its introduction cannot be clearly determined; but, about the middle of the eighth century, Winifred, or Boniface, archbishop of Mons, who was himself a native of England, presented to Ethelbert, king of Kent, one hawk and two falcons; and a king of the Mercians requested the same Winifred to send to him two falcons that had been trained to kill cranes.[5] In the succeeding century, the sport was very highly esteemed by the Anglo-Saxon nobility; and the training and flying of hawks became one of the essentials in the education of

[1] And printed by Pynson A. D. 1508.
[2] Lib. v. cap. 8
[3] Pliny Nat. Hist. lib. x. cap. 8.
[4] Peacham's Complete Gentleman, p. 183
[5] Epist. Winifred. See Warton's Hist. Eng. Poet. vol. ii. p. 221.

a young man of rank. Alfred the great is commended for his early proficiency in this, as well as in other fashionable amusements;[1] he is even said to have written a treatise upon the subject of hawking, but there is no such work at present in existence, that can with any degree of certainty be attributed to him. The pastime of hawking must, no doubt, at this period, have been very generally followed, to call for the prohibition inserted in a charter granted to the Abbey of Abington, by Kenulph, king of the Mercians; which restrains all persons from carrying of hawks, and thereby trespassing upon the lands belonging to the monks who resided therein.[2] This amusement continued to be a fashionable one to the end of the Saxon æra. Byrhtric, a Saxon nobleman, who died towards the end of the tenth century, among other valuable articles, left by will, to earl Ælfric, two hawks, and all his heabop hunbap. which Lambarde renders hedge-hounds; spaniels, I suppose, for the purpose of flushing the game.[3] We have already seen that Edward the confessor was highly pleased with the sports of the field, and pursued them constantly every day, allotting the whole of his leisure time to hunting or hawking.[4]

III.—ROMANTIC STORY RELATIVE TO HAWKING.

The monkish writers, after the conquest, not readily accounting for the first coming of the Danes, or for the cruelties that they committed in this country, have assigned several causes; and, among others, the following story is related, which, if it might be depended upon, would prove that the pastime of hawking was practised by the nobility of Denmark at a very early period; such a supposition has at least probability on its side, even if it should not be thought to derive much strength from the authority of this narrative.

A Danish chieftain, of high rank, some say of royal blood, named Lothbroc, amusing himself with his hawk near sea, upon the western coasts of Denmark, the bird, in pursuit of her game, fell into the water; Lothbroc, anxious for her safety, got into a little boat that was near at hand, and rowed from the shore to take her up, but before he could return to the land, a sudden storm arose, and he was driven out to sea. After suffering

[1] See p. 3. sec. iii.
[2] This charter was granted A. D. 821. Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. i. p. 100.
[3] See the whole of the curious will in Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent, p. 540.
[4] See p. 4. sec. v.

great hardship, during a voyage of infinite peril, he reached the coast of Norfolk, and landed at a port called Rodham: he was immediately seized by the inhabitants, and sent to the court of Edmund, king of the East Angles; when that monarch was made acquainted with the occasion of his coming, he received him very favourably, and soon became particularly attached to him, on account of his great skill in the training and flying of hawks. The partiality which Edmund manifested for this unfortunate stranger, excited the jealousy of Beoric, the king's falconer, who took an opportunity of murdering the Dane, whilst he was exercising of his birds in the midst of a wood, and secreted the body: which was soon afterwards discovered by the vigilance of a favourite spaniel. Beoric was apprehended, and, it seems, convicted of the murder; for he was condemned to be put into an open boat (some say the very boat in which the Danish chieftain came to England) without oars, mast, or rudder, and in that condition abandoned to the mercy of the ocean. It so chanced, that the boat was wafted to the very point of land that Lothbroc came from; and Beoric, escaped from the danger of the waves, was apprehended by the Danes, and taken before two of the chieftains of the country, named Hinguar and Hubba; who were both of them the sons of Lothbroc. The crafty falconer soon learned this circumstance, and, in order to acquire their favour, made them acquainted with the murder of their father, which he affirmed was executed at the command of king Edmund, and that he himself had suffered the hardship at sea, from which he had been delivered by reaching the shore, because he had the courage to oppose the king's order, and endeavoured to save the life of the Danish nobleman. Incited by this abominable falsehood to revenge the murder of their father, by force of arms, they invaded the kingdom of the East Angles, pillaged the country, and having taken the king prisoner, caused him to be tied to a stake, and shot to death with arrows.

This narration bears upon the face of it the genuine marks of a legendary tale. Lidgate, a monk of Saint Edmund's Bury, has given it a place, with the addition of several miraculous circumstances, in his poetical life of king Edmund, who was the tutelar saint of the abbey to which he belonged.[1] On the other

[1] Lidgate presented this poem to king Henry VI. when that monarch held his court at Bury. The presentation MS. is yet extant in the Harleian Library, No. 2278

hand, every one who is acquainted with the history of the Anglo-Saxons must know, that the Danish pirates had infested the coasts of England, and committed many dreadful depredations, long before the time assigned for the above event; and the success of the first parties encouraged others to make the like attempts.

IV.—GRAND FALCONER OF FRANCE.

Hawking is often mentioned, says a modern author, in the capitularies of the eighth and ninth centuries. The grand fauconnier of France was an officer of great eminence; his annual salary was four thousand florins; he was attended by fifty gentlemen, and fifty assistant falconers; he was allowed to keep three hundred hawks, he licensed every vender of hawks in France, and received a tax upon every bird sold in that kingdom, and even within the verge of the court; and the king never rode out upon any occasion of consequence without this officer attending upon him.[1]

In Doomsday-book, a hawk's airy[2] is returned among the most valuable articles of property; which proves the high estimation these birds were held in at the commencement of the Norman government; and probably some establishment, like that above mentioned, was made for the royal falconer in England.

V.—FONDNESS OF EDWARD III. &c. FOR HAWKING.

Edward III., according to Froissart, had with him in his army when he invaded France, thirty falconers on horseback, who had charge of his hawks;[3] and every day he either hunted, or went to the river[4] for the purpose of hawking, as his fancy inclined him. From the frequent mention that is made of hawking by the water-side, not only by the historians, but also by the romance writers of the middle ages, I suppose that the pursuit of water-fowls afforded the most diversion. The author last quoted, speaking of the earl of Flanders, says, he was always at the river,[5] where his falconer cast off one falcon after the heron, and the earl another. In the poetical romance of the "Squire of low Degree," the king of Hungary promises his daughter, that, at her return from hunting, she should hawk by the river-side, with gos hawk, gentle falcon, and other well-

[1] Warton's Hist. of English Poetry, vol. ii. p. 221.
[2] Aira Accipitris.
[3] Trente fauconniers à cheval, chargez d'oiseaux. Froissart's Chron. vol. i. cap. 210.
[4] Ou en riviere. Ibid.
[5] Tous jours en riviere. Ibid. cap. 140.

tutored birds;[1] so also Chaucer, in the rhime of sir Thopas, says that he could hunt the wild deer,

> And ryde on haukynge by the ryver,
> With grey gos hawke in hande.[2]

An anonymous writer, of the seventeenth century, records the following anecdote: "Sir Thomas Jermin, going out with his servants, and brooke hawkes one evening, at Bury,[3] they were no sooner abroad, but fowle were found, and he called out to one of his falconers, Off with your jerkin: the fellow being into the wind[4] did not heare him; at which he stormed, and still cried out, Off with your jerkin, you knave, off with your jerkin: now it fell out that there was, at that instant, a plaine townsman of Bury, in a freeze jerkin, stood betwixt him and his falconer, who seeing sir Thomas in such a rage, and thinking he had spoken to him, unbuttoned himself amaine, threw off his jerkin, and besought his worshippe not to be offended, for he would off with his doublet too, to give him content."[5]

6. Saxon Hawking—IX. Century.

This engraving represents a Saxon nobleman and his falconer, with their hawks, upon the bank of a river, waiting for the rising of the game. The delineation is from a Saxon manuscript written at the close of the ninth century, or at the commencement of the tenth; in the Cotton Library.[6] Another drawing upon the same subject, with a little variation, occurs in a Saxon manuscript, somewhat more modern.[7] The two following engravings are from drawings in a manuscript written early in the fourteenth century, preserved in the Royal Library.[8] We see a party of both sexes hawking by the water side; the fal-

[1] Garrick's Collect. of old Plays, K. vol. 1
[2] Canterbury Tales.
[3] Bury St. Edmund's, in Suffolk.
[4] That is, to the windward; I use the author's own words.
[5] MS. Harl. 6395. Merry Passages and Jeasts, art. 223.
[6] Tiberius, C. vi.
[7] Julius. A. vi.
[8] Marked 2 B. vii

coner is frightening the fowls to make them rise, and the hawk is in the act of seizing upon one of them.[1]

7. Hawking—XIV. Century

8. Ladies Hawking—XIV. Century.

[1] [The fowls before the falconer in the original drawing are placed below in the present engraving, to accommodate it to the page.]

VI.—FONDNESS OF LADIES AND THE CLERGY FOR HAWKING.

We may also here notice, that the ladies not only accompanied the gentlemen in pursuit of this diversion, but often practised it by themselves; and, if we may believe a contemporary writer,[1] in the thirteenth century, they even excelled the men in knowledge and exercise of the art of falconry, which reason, he very ungallantly produces, in proof that the pastime was frivolous and effeminate. Hawking was forbidden to the clergy by the canons of the church; but the prohibition was by no means sufficient to restrain them from the pursuit of this favourite and fashionable amusement. On which account, as well as for hunting, they were severely lashed by the poets and moralists; and, indeed, the one was rarely spoken of without the other being included; for those who delighted in hawking were generally proficients in hunting also.[2]

VII.—DECLINE OF HAWKING.

The practice of hawking declined, from the moment the musket was brought to perfection, which pointing out a method more ready and more certain of procuring game, and, at the same time, affording an equal degree of air and exercise, the immense expense of training, and maintaining of hawks became altogether unnecessary; it was therefore no wonder that the assistance of the gun superseded that of the bird; or that the art of hawking, when rendered useless, should be laid aside. Its fall was very rapid. Hentzner, who wrote his Itinerary A. D. 1598, assures us that hawking was the general sport of the English nobility; at the same time, most of the best treatises upon this subject were written. At the commencement of the seventeenth century, it seems to have been in the zenith of its glory. At the close of the same century, the sport was rarely practised, and a few years afterwards hardly known.

VIII.—METHOD OF HAWKING.

Hawking was performed on horseback, or on foot, as occasion required. On horseback, when in the fields, and open country; and on foot, when in the woods and coverts. In following the

[1] Johan. Sarisburiensis, lib. i. cap. 4.

[2] See p. 4. sec. v.

hawk on foot, it was usual for the sportsman to have a stout pole with him, to assist him in leaping over little rivulets and ditches, which might otherwise prevent him in his progress; and this we learn from an historical fact related by Hall; who informs us, that Henry VIII. pursuing his hawk on foot, at Hitchen in Hertfordshire, attempted, with the assistance of his pole, to jump over a ditch that was half full of muddy water, the pole broke, and the king fell with his head into the mud, where he would have been stifled had not a footman, named John Moody, who was near at hand, and seeing the accident, leaped into the ditch, and released his majesty from his perilous situation; "and so," says the honest historian, "God of hys goodnesse preserved him."

IX.—CAPARISON OF A HAWK.

When the hawk was not flying at her game, she was usually hood-winked, with a cap or hood provided for that purpose, and fitted to her head; and this hood was worn abroad, as well as at home. All hawks taken upon "the fist," the term used for carrying them upon the hand, had straps of leather called jesses, put about their legs. The jesses were made sufficiently long for the knots to appear between the middle and the little fingers of the hand that held them, so that the lunes, or small thongs of leather, might be fastened to them with two tyrrits, or rings; and the lunes were loosely wound round the little finger. It appears that sometimes the jesses were of silk. Lastly, their legs were adorned with bells, fastened with rings of leather, each leg having one; and the leathers, to which the bells were attached, were denominated bewits; and to the bewits was added the creance, or long thread, by which the bird in tutoring, was drawn back, after she had been permitted to fly; and this was called the reclaiming of the hawk. The bewits, we are informed, were useful to keep the hawk from "winding when she bated," that is, when she fluttered her wings to fly after her game.

Respecting the bells, it is particularly recommended that they should not be too heavy, to impede the flight of the bird; and that they should be of equal weight, sonorous, shrill, and musical; not both of one sound, but the one a semitone below the

[1] Hall in the life of Henry VIII. sub an. xvi.

other;[1] they ought not to be broken, especially in the sounding part, because, in that case, the sound emitted would be dull and unpleasing. There is, says the Book of Saint Albans, great choice of sparrow-hawk bells, and they are cheap enough; but for gos-hawk bells, those made at Milan are called the best; and, indeed, they are excellent; for they are commonly sounded with silver, and charged for accordingly. But we have good bells brought from Dordreght (Dort), which are well paired, and produce a very shrill, but pleasant sound.

I am told, that silver being mixed with the metal when the bells are cast, adds much to the sweetness of the tone; and hence probably the allusion of Shakespear, when he says,

How silver sweet sound lovers' tongues by night.

I cannot help adding in this place a passage from an old play, written by Thomas Heywood; wherein one of the characters, speaking of a hawk flying, says

Her bels, Sir Francis, had not both one waight,
Nor was one semitune above the other.
Mei thinkes these Millane bels do sound too full,
And spoile the mounting of your hawke.[2]

So much for the birds themselves; but the person who carried the hawk was also to be provided with gloves for that purpose, to prevent their talons from hurting his hand. In the inventories of apparel belonging to king Henry VIII. such articles frequently occur; at Hampton Court, in the jewel house, were seven hawkes' gloves embroidered.[3]

X.—EARLY TREATISES ON HAWKING—SUPERSTITIOUS CURE OF HAWKS.

We have a poetical fragment, written in old Norman French, as early as the thirteenth century, containing some general observations respecting the management of hawks, which the author informs us he found in a book made for, or by, the good king Edward.[4] Wanley, in his catalogue of the Harleian manuscripts, suspects there is some mistake in the name; and that this fragment is really part of a treatise upon hawking, which he tells us was written by king Alfred; but I rather think the author is

[1] These observations are taken from "The Boke of Saint Albans;" a subsequent edition says, "at least a note under."

[2] "A Woman killed with Kindness," third edition, 1617. Garrick's Coll. E. vol. iv.

[3] MS. Harl. 1419.

[4] "Ke en escrit trove, si cum io lis, el livere al bon Rei Edward." MS. Harl. 978.

correct in this particular; for another manuscript[1] in English, and about a century more modern, treating upon the same subject, has the following indication at the close, "Here endith the booke of haukyng, after Prince Edwarde, kynge of Englande." It appears to me, that the original treatise referred to by both the above authors, should be attributed to Edward the confessor; not perhaps written by him, but at his command; which supposition is partly justified by the extreme partiality he had for this diversion.[2]

In the last-mentioned manuscript we find not only the general rules relative to hawking, but an account of the diseases incident to the birds themselves, and the medicines proper to be administered to them upon such occasions. I shall only mention the following superstitious ceremonies: after a hawk has been ill, and is sufficiently recovered to pursue the game, the owner has this admonition given to him; "On the morrow tyde, when thou goest oute to haukyng, say, In the name of the Lord, the birds of heaven shall be beneath thy feet: also, if he be hurt by the heron, say, The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has conquered; Hallelujah: and if he be bitte of any man, say, He that the wicked man doth bind, the Lord at his coming shall set free."[3] These sentences, I suppose, were considered as charms, but how far they operated, I shall leave the reader to judge; the coupling of texts of scripture with such an amusement, seems also in favour of the supposition that the book was composed for the monkish monarch, Edward the confessor.

XI.—LAWS RESPECTING HAWKING.

No persons but such as were of the highest rank were permitted under the Norman government to keep hawks, as appears from a clause inserted in the Forest Charter: this charter king John was compelled to sign; and by it the privilege was given to every free man to have airies of hawks, sparrow-hawks, falcons, eagles, and herons in his own woods.[4] In the thirty-fourth year of the reign of Edward III. a statute was made, by which a person finding a falcon, tercelet, laner, laneret, or any other species of hawk, that had been lost by its owner, was commanded

[1] MS. Harl. 2340. [2] See sec. v. p. 4.

[3] In nomine Domini volatilia cœli erunt sub pedibus tuis—Vicit Leo de tribu Juda radix David Alleluya—Quem iniquus homo ligavit, Dominus per adventum suum solvet. [4] Carta de Forresta, cap. xi.

to carry the same to the sheriff of the county wherein it was found; the duty of the sheriff was to cause a proclamation to be made in all the principal towns of the county, that he had such a hawk in his custody, and that the nobleman to whom it belonged, or his falconer, might ascertain the same to be his property, and have it restored to him, he first paying the costs that had been incurred by the sheriff; and, if in the space of four months no claimant appeared, it became the property of the finder, if he was a person of rank, upon his paying the costs to the sheriff; on the contrary, if he was an unqualified man, the hawk belonged to the sheriff: but the person who found it was to be rewarded for his trouble. If the person who found the hawk concealed the same from the owner or his falconer, he was liable upon discovery to pay the price of the bird to the owner, and to suffer two years' imprisonment; and if he was unable to pay the fine, his imprisonment was extended to a longer term.[1] In the thirty-seventh year of the same monarch this act was confirmed, with additional severity; and the stealing and concealing of a hawk, was made felony.[2] In the same reign the bishop of Ely excommunicated certain persons for stealing a hawk that was sitting upon her perch in the cloisters of Bermondsey, in Southwark; but this piece of sacrilege was committed during divine service in the choir, and the hawk was the property of the bishop.[3]

In the reign of Henry VII. a restrictive act was established, prohibiting any man from bearing a hawk bred in England, called a nyesse,[4] a gos-hawk, a tassel, a laner, a laneret, or a falcon, upon pain of forfeiting the same to the king, but that he should use such hawks as were brought from abroad;[5] what good purpose this ordinance was to promote, I am at a loss to say. The laws respecting these birds were frequently varied in the succeeding times, and the alterations seem, in some instances, to have been exceedingly capricious.

As the hawk was a bird so highly esteemed by the nobility of England, there will be no wonder if we find the royal edicts established for the preservation of their eggs; accordingly, in the eleventh year of Henry VII. it was decreed, that if any person was convicted of taking from the nests, or destroying the

[1] Rot. Parl. 34 Ed. III. [2] Ibid. 37 Ed. III.
[3] A. D. 1337. Regist. Adami Orleton. Epis. Wint. fol. 56.
[4] A hawk was called a nyesse, or an eyesse, from her having watery eyes.
[5] Stat. xi. Hen. VII.

eggs of a falcon, a gos-hawk, a laner, or a swan, he should suffer imprisonment for one year and one day, and be liable to a fine at the king's pleasure; one half of which belonged to the crown, and the other half to the owner of the ground where the eggs were found; and, if a man destroyed the same sort of eggs upon his own ground, he was equally subject to the penalty.[1] This act was somewhat meliorated in the reign of Elizabeth, and the imprisonment reduced to three months: but then the offender was obligated to find security for his good behaviour for seven years, or remain in prison until he did.

XII.—VALUE OF HAWKS.

The severity of the above-mentioned laws may probably excite the surprise of such of my readers, as are not informed how highly this kind of birds was formerly appreciated. At the commencement of the seventeenth century, we find, that a gos-hawk and a tassel-hawk were sold for one hundred marks, which was a large sum in those days; and the price is by no means mentioned as singular or extravagant; for, on the contrary, an author, Edmund Best, who published a treatise upon hawks and hawking, printed at London, 1619, and who himself trained and sold them, insinuates, that the parting from the birds was considered as a favour: and no doubt it was so, if the hawks in training required such incredible pains and watchfulness, both by night and by day, as he declares are absolutely necessary. And upon this account such as were properly trained and exercised were esteemed presents worthy the acceptance of a king or an emperor. In the eighth year of the reign of Edward III. the king of Scotland sent him a falcon gentle as a present, which he not only most graciously received, but rewarded the falconer who brought it with the donation of forty shillings; a proof how highly the bird was valued.[2] It is further said, that in the reign of James I. Sir Thomas Monson gave one thousand pounds for a cast of hawks. A cast of hawks of toure, says an old book on hawking, signifies two, and a lese three.

XIII.—DIFFERENT SPECIES OF HAWKS.

The books of hawking assign to the different ranks of persons the sort of hawks proper to be used by them: and they are placed in the following order—

[1] Stat. xi. Hen. VII.
[2] Expen. Hosp. Reg. Ed. III. MS. Cott. Nero, C. viii. p. 275.

The eagle, the vulture, and the merloun, for an emperor.
The ger-faulcon, and the tercel of the ger-faulcon, for a king.
The faulcon gentle, and the tercel gentle, for a prince.
The faulcon of the rock, for a duke.
The faulcon peregrine, for an earl.
The bastard, for a baron.
The sacre, and the sacret, for a knight.
The lanere, and the laneret, for an esquire.
The marlyon, for a lady.
The hobby, for a young man.[1]
The gos-hawk, for a yeoman.
The tercel, for a poor man.
The sparrow-hawk, for a priest.
The musket, for a holy water clerk.
The kesterel, for a knave or servant.

This list includes, I presume, the greater part, if not all, of the names appertaining to the birds used in hawking. The Mews at Charing-cross, Westminster, is so called, from the word mew, which in the falconers' language, is the name of a place wherein the hawks are put at the moulting time, when they cast their feathers. The king's hawks were kept at this place as early as they ear 1377, an. 1 Richard II.; but A. D. 1537, the 27th year of Henry VIII., it was converted into stables for that monarch's horses, and the hawks were removed.[2]

XIV.—TERMS USED IN HAWKING.

As in hunting, so in hawking, the sportsmen had their peculiar impressions, and therefore the tyro in the art of falconry is recommended to learn the following arrangement of terms as they were to be applied to the different kinds of birds assembled in companies. A sege of herons, and of bitterns; an herd of swans, of cranes, and of curlews; a dopping of sheldrakes;[3] a spring of teels; a covert of cootes; a gaggle of geese; a badelynge of ducks; a sord or sute of mallards; a muster of peacocks; a nye of pheasants; a bevy of quails; a covey of partridges; a congregation of plovers: a flight of doves; a dule of turtles; a walk of snipes; a fall of woodcocks; a

[1] Between this and the next line the author makes the following observation: "These ben hawkes of toure, and ben bothe dlured to be called and reclaymed." Jewel for Gentrie Lond. 1614.

[2] Stow's Survey of London.

[3] The sheldrake is a species of wild fowl.

brood of hens; a building of rooks; a murmuration of starlings; an exaltation of larks; a flight of swallows; a host of sparrows; a watch of nightingales; and a charm of goldfinches.

XV.—FOWLING AND FISHING—THE STALKING HORSE—LOWBELLING.

The arts of Fowling and Fishing are usually added to the more modern treatises upon hunting and hawking. I shall select a few observations that occur respecting the former; but with regard to the latter, I have not met with any particulars sufficiently deviating from the present methods of taking fish to claim a place in this work.

Fowling, says Burton, may be performed with guns, lime-twigs, nets, glades, gins, strings, baits, pit-falls, pipe-calls, stalking horses, setting dogs, and decoy ducks; or with chaffnets for smaller birds;[1] there may also be added bows and arrows, which answered the purpose of guns before they were invented and brought to perfection.

The Stalking Horse, originally, was a horse trained for the purpose and covered with trappings, so as to conceal the sportsman from the game he intended to shoot at. It was particularly useful to the archer, by affording him an opportunity of approaching the birds unseen by them, so near that his arrows might easily reach them; but as this method was frequently inconvenient, and often impracticable, the fowler had recourse to art, and caused a canvass figure to be stuffed, and painted like a horse grazing, but sufficiently light, that it might be moved at pleasure with one hand. These deceptions were also made in the form of oxen, cows, and stags, either for variety, or for convenience sake. In the inventories of the wardrobes, belonging to king Henry VIII., we frequently find the allowance of certain quantities of stuff for the purpose of making "stalking coats, and stalking hose for the use of his majesty."[2]

There is also another method o fowling, which, says my author, for I will give it nearly in his own words, is performed with nets, and in the night time; and the darker the night the better.—"This sport we call in England, most commonly bird-batting, and some call it lowbelling; and the use of it is to go with a great light of cressets, or rags of linen dipped in

[1] Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, book v. chap. 8. edit Lond. 1660.
[2] Harleian, MS. 2284.

tallow, which will make a good light; and you must have a pan or plate made like a lanthorn, to carry your light in, which must have a great socket to hold the light, and carry it before you, on your breast, with a bell in your other hand, and of a great bigness, made in the manner of a cow-bell, but still larger; and you must ring it always after one order.—If you carry the bell, you must have two companions with nets, one on each side of you; and what with the bell, and what with the light, the birds will be so amazed, that when you come near them, they will turn up their white bellies: your companions shall then lay their nets quietly upon them, and take them. But you must continue to ring the bell; for, if the sound shall cease, the other birds, if there be any more near at hand, will rise up and fly away."—"This is," continues the author, "an excellent method to catch larks, woodcocks, partridges, and all other land birds."[1]

The pipe-call, mentioned by Burton, is noticed under a different denomination by Chaucer; "Lo," says he, "the birde is begyled with the merry voice of the foulers' whistel, when it is closed in your nette,"—alluding to the deceptive art of the bird-catchers in his time.[2]

I shall just observe, that there are twelve prints, published by John Overton, upon the popular subjects of hunting, hawking, and fishing, &c. engraved by Hollar, from designs by Francis Barlow, which perfectly exemplify the manner in which those pastimes were practised, somewhat more than a century back.

[1] Jewel for Gentrie. Lond. 1614. [2] Testament of Love, book ii.

CHAPTER III.

I. Horse-racing known to the Saxons.—II. Races in Smithfield, and why.—III. Races, at what Seasons practised.—IV. The Chester Races.—V. Stamford Races.—VI. Value of Running-horses.—VII. Highly prized by the Poets, &c.—VIII. Horse-racing commended as a liberal Pastime.—IX. Charles II. and other Monarchs Encouragers of Horse-racing;—Races on Coleshill-heath

I.—HORSE-RACING KNOWN TO THE SAXONS.

It was requisite in former times for a man of fashion to understand the nature and properties of horses, and to ride well; or, using the words of an old romance writer, "to runne horses and to approve them."[1] In proportion to the establishment of this maxim, swift running-horses of course rose into estimation; and we know that in the ninth century they were considered as presents well worthy the acceptance of kings and princes.

When Hugh, the head of the house of the Capets, afterwards monarchs of France, solicited the hand of Edelswitha, the sister of Athelstan, he sent to that prince, among other valuable presents, several running-horses,[2] with their saddles and their bridles, the latter being embellished with bits of yellow gold. It is hence concluded, and indeed with much appearance of truth, that horse-racing was known and practised by the Anglo-Saxons, but most probably confined to persons of rank and opulence, and practised only for amusement sake.

II.—RACES IN SMITHFIELD.

The first indication of a sport of this kind occurs in the description of London, written by Fitzstephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II. He tells us, that horses were usually exposed for sale in West Smithfield; and, in order to prove the excellency of the most valuable hackneys and charging steeds, they were matched against each other; his words are to this effect,[3] "When a race is to be run by this sort of horses, and perhaps by others,

[1] Knight of the Swan, Garrick's Collect. K. vol. x.

[2] Equos cursores. Malmsb. de Gest. Reg. Angl. lib. ii. cap. 6.

[3] I have followed the translation published by Mr. White, of Fleet-street, A. D. 1772. See Stow's Survey of London, and republished with additions by Strype. [The translation of Fitzstephen published by Mr. White, was made by the late Dr. Samuel Pegge.]

which also in their kind are strong and fleet, a shout is immediately raised, and the common horses are ordered to withdraw out of the way. Three jockeys, or sometimes only two, as the match is made, prepare themselves for the contest; such as being used to ride know how to manage their horses with judgment: the grand point is, to prevent a competitor from getting before them. The horses, on their part, are not without emulation, they tremble and are impatient, and are continually in motion: at last the signal once given, they strike, devour the course, hurrying along with unremitting velocity. The jockeys, inspired with the thoughts of applause and the hopes of victory, clap spurs to their willing horses, brandish their whips, and cheer them with their cries."

III.—HORSE-RACING SEASONS.

In the middle ages there were certain seasons of the year when the nobility indulged themselves in running their horses and especially in the Easter and Whitsuntide holidays. In the old metrical romance of "Sir Bevis of Southampton,"[1] it is said,

> n somer at Whitsontyde,
> Whan knightes most on horsebacke ride;
> A cours, let they make on a daye,
> Steedes, and Palfraye, for to assaye;
> Whiche horse, that best may ren,
> Three myles the cours was then,
> Who that might ryde him shoulde
> Have forty pounds of redy golde.

Commenius in his vocabulary, entitled "Orbis Sensualium Pictus," published towards the conclusion of the sixteenth century, indeed says, "At this day, tilting, or the quintain is used, where a ring is struck with a truncheon, instead of horse-races, which," adds he, "are grown out of use."

A writer of the seventeenth century[2] tells us, that horse-racing, which had formerly been practised at Eastertide, "was then put down, as being contrary to the holiness of the season;" but for this prohibition I have no further authority.

IV.—CHESTER RACES.

It is certain, that horse-races were held upon various holidays, at different parts of the kingdom, and in preference to other

[1] "Syr Bevys of Hampton," black letter, without date, printed by Wm. Copland. Garrick's Collect. K. vol. ix.

[2] Bourne Antiq. Vulgares, chap. xxiv.

pastimes. "It had been customary," says a Chester antiquary,[1] "time out of mind, upon Shrove Tuesday, for the company of saddlers belonging to the city of Chester, to present to the drapers a wooden ball, embellished with flowers, and placed upon the point of a lance; this ceremony was performed in the presence of the mayor, at the cross in the 'Rodhee,' or Roody, an open place near the city; but this year,"[2] continues he, "the ball was changed into a bell of silver, valued at three shillings and sixpence, or more, to be given to him who shall run the best, and the farthest on horseback, before them upon the same day."[3] These bells were afterwards denominated Saint George's bells; and we are told that in the last year of James I. John Brereton, inn-keeper, mayor of Chester, first caused the horses entered for this race, then called Saint George's race, to start from the point, beyond the new tower: and appointed them to run five times round the Roody: "and he," says my author,[4] "who won the last course or trayne, received the bell, of a good value, of eight or ten pounds, or thereabout, and to have it for ever; which moneyes were collected of the citizens, to a sum for that purpose."[5] By the author's having added, that the winner at this race was to have the bell, and have it for ever, is implied, that it had formerly been used as a temporary mark of honour, by the successful horseman, and afterwards returned to the corporation; this alteration was made April 23, A. D. 1624.

Here we see the commencement of a regular horse-race, but whether the courses were in immediate succession, or at different intervals, is not perfectly clear; we find not, however, the least indication of distance posts, weighing the riders, loading them with weights, and many other niceties that are observed in the present day. The Chester races were instituted merely for amusement, but now such prodigious sums are usually dependent upon the event of a horse-race, that these apparently trivial matters, are become indispensably necessary. Forty-six years afterwards,[6] according to the same writer, the sheriffs of Chester "would have no calves-head feast, but put the charge of it into a piece of plate, to be run for on that day, Shrove Tuesday; and the high-sheriff borrowed a Barbary horse of sir Thomas

[1] Probably the elder Randel Holme of Chester, one of the city heralds. MS Harl. 2150. fol. 235.
[2] The thirty-first of Henry VIII. [3] That is Shrove Tuesday
[4] Probably the younger Randel Holme. [5] MS. Harl. 2125.
[6] A. D. 1665. and 5 Charles II

Middleton, which won him the plate; and being master of the race, he would not suffer the horses of master Massey, of Puddington, and of sir Philip Egerton, of Oulton, to run, because they came the day after the time prefixed for the horses to be brought, and kept in the city; which thing caused all the gentry to relinquish our races ever since."

V.—STAMFORD RACES.

Races something similar to those above mentioned, are described by Butcher,[1] as practised in the vicinity of the town of Stamford, in Lincolnshire. "A concourse," says he, "of noblemen and gentlemen meet together, in mirth, peace, and amity, for the exercise of their swift running-horses, every Thursday in March. The prize they run for is a silver and gilt cup, with a cover, to the value of seven or eight pounds, provided by the care of the alderman for the time being; but the money is raised out of the interest of a stock formerly made up by the nobility and gentry, which are neighbours, and well-wishers to the town."

VI.—VALUE OF RUNNING-HORSES.

Running-horses are frequently mentioned in the registers of the royal expenditures. It is notorious, that king John was so fond of swift horses and dogs for the chase, that he received many of his fines in the one or the other;[2] but at the same time it does not appear that he used the horses for any purposes of pleasure, beyond the pursuits of hunting, hawking, and such like sports of the field.

In the reign of Edward III. the running-horses purchased for the king's service, were generally estimated at twenty marks, or thirteen pounds, six shillings, and eightpence each; but some few of them were prized as high as twenty-five marks.[3] I met with an entry, dated the ninth year of this king's reign, which states, that the king of Navarre sent him as a present two running-horses, which I presume were very valuable, because he gave the person who brought them no less than one hundred shillings for his reward.[4]

[1] In his Survey of the Town of Stamford, first printed A. D. 1646. chap. 10.

[2] See p. 7. sec. vii.

[3] Bernado de Nictum pro uno cursorio hardo empto de eodem, xxv. marc. Compot. Garderoba. An. xi. Ed. III. MS. Cot. Nero, C. viii. fol. 219.

[4] Michali de la Were Scut. Regis Navarr. present domino Regi duos equos cursores ex parte dono Domini sui, de dono Regis, C sol. Ibid.

VII.—RUNNING-HORSES OF THE HEROES OF ROMANCE.

If we appeal to the poets, we shall find, that swift running-horses were greatly esteemed by the heroes who figure in their romances; and rated at prodigious prices; for instance, in an ancient poem, which celebrates the warlike actions of Richard I., it is said, that in the camp of the emperor, as he is called, of Cyprus,

> Too stedes fownde kinge Richarde,
> Thatt oon favell, thatt other Lyard:
> Yn this worlde, they hadde no pere;[1]
> Dromedary, neither destrere,[2]
> Stede, rabyte, ne cammele,[4]
> Goeth none so swyfte without fayle
> For a thousand pownd of golde,
> Ne sholde the one be solde.

And though the rhymist may be thought to have claimed the poetical licence for exaggeration, respecting the value of these two famous steeds, the statement plainly indicates that in his time there were horses very highly prized on account of their swiftness. We do not find indeed, that they were kept for the purpose of racing only, as horses are in the present day; but rather, as I before observed, for hunting and other purposes of a similar nature; and also to be used by heralds and messengers in cases of urgency.

Race-horses were prized on account of their breed, in the time of Elizabeth, as appears from the following observations in one of bishop Hall's Satires.—

> ———dost thou prize
> Thy brute beasts worth by their dams qualities?
> Says't thou this colt shall prove a swift pac'd steed,
> Onely because a Jennet did him breed?
> Or says't thou this same horse shall win the prize,
> Because his dam was swiftest Trunchefice
> Or Runcevall his syre; himself a gallaway?
> While like a tireling jade, he lags half away.[5]

VIII.—HORSE-RACING A LIBERAL PASTIME.

Two centuries back horse-racing was considered as a liberal pastime, practised for pleasure rather than profit, without the least idea of reducing it to a system of gambling. It is

[1] MS. Harl. 4690, written early in the fourteenth century. [2] Peer or equal.
[3] A French word, signifying a large powerful horse.
[4] Steed, rabbit, nor camel. [5] Lib. iv. fat. 3. Edit. 1599.

ranked with hunting and hawking, and opposed to dice and card playing by an old Scotch poet, who laments that the latter had in great measure superseded the former.[1] One of the puritanical writers[2] in the reign of Elizabeth, though he is very severe against cards, dice, vain plays, interludes, and other idle pastimes, allows of horse-racing as "yielding good exercise," which he certainly would not have done, had it been in the least degree ol noxious to the censure which at present it so justly claims.

Burton,[3] who wrote at the decline of the seventeenth century says sarcastically, "Horse-races are desports of great men, and good in themselves, though many gentlemen by such means gallop quite out of their fortunes;" which may be considered as a plain indication, that they had begun to be productive of mischief at the time he wrote: and fifty years afterwards, they were the occasion of a new and destructive species of gambling. The following lines are from a ballad in D'Urfey's collection of songs: it is called "New Market," which place was then famous for the exhibition of horse-races.

Let cullies that lose at a race
Go venture at hazard to win,
Or he that is bubbl'd at dice
Recover at cocking again;
Let jades that are founder'd be bought,
Let jockeys play crimp to make sport.—
———Another makes racing a trade,
And dreams of his projects to come;
And many a crimp match has made,
By bubbing another man's groom.[4]

IX.—ROYAL PATRONS OF HORSE-RACING—RACES ON COLESHILL HEATH, &c.

From what has been said, it seems clear enough, that this pastime was originally practised in England for the sake of the exercise, or by way of emulation, and, generally speaking, the owners of the horses were the riders. These contests, however, attracted the notice of the populace, and drew great crowds of people together to behold them; which induced the inhabitants of many towns and cities to affix certain times for the performance of such sports, and prizes were appointed as rewards for

[1] Poem of Covetice, quoted by Warton. Hist. English Poetry, vol. ii. p. 316.
[2] John Northbrooke.
[3] Anatomy of Melancholy, part. ii. sec. 2, chap. 4, edit. 1660.
[4] Pills to purge Melancholy, fourth edit. 1719, vol. ii. p. 53.

the successful candidates. The prize was usually a silver cup, or some other piece of plate, about eight or ten pounds value.

In the reign of James I. public races were established in many parts of the kingdom; and it is said that the discipline and modes of preparing the horses upon such occasions, were much the same as are practised in the present day.[1] The races were then called bell courses, because, as we have seen above, the prize was a silver bell.

At the latter end of the reign of Charles I. races were held in Hyde Park, and at New Market. After the restoration, horse-racing was revived and much encouraged by Charles II. who frequently honoured this pastime with his presence; and, for his own amusement, when he resided at Windsor, appointed races to be made in Datchet mead. At New Market, where it is said he entered horses and run them in his name, he established a house for his better accommodation;[2] and he also occasionally visited other places where horse-races were instituted. I met with the following doggerel verses in a metrical Itinerary, written at the close of the seventeenth century. The author,[3] for he hardly deserves the name of poet, speaking of Burford Downs, makes these remarks:

Next for the glory of the place,
Here has been rode many a race,—
—King Charles the Second I saw here;
But I've forgotten in what year.
The duke of Monmouth here also,
Made his horse to swete and blow;
Lovelace, Pembrook, and other gallants
Have been ventring here their talents,
And Nicholas Bainton on black Sloven,
Got silver plate by labor and drudging, &c.

At this time it seems, that the bells were converted into cups, or bowls, or some other pieces of plate, which were usually valued at one hundred guineas each; and upon these trophies of victory the exploits and pedigree of the successful horses were most commonly engraved. William III. was also a patroniser of this pastime, and established an academy for riding, and his queen not only continued the bounty of her predecessors, but added several plates to the former donations. George I. instead of a piece of plate, gave a hundred guineas to be paid in specie.

[1] Ency. Brit. under Race.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Probably Matthew Thomas Baskervile, whose name appears at the end; it was written about the year 1690. MS. Harl. 4716.

In one of the Spectators, we meet with the following advertisement, extracted, as we are told, from a paper called the Post Boy:[1] "On the ninth of October next will be run for on Coleshill Heath, in Warwickshire, a plate of six guineas value, three heats, by any horse, mare, or gelding, that hath not won above the value of five pounds: the winning horse to be sold for ten pounds, to carry ten stone weight if fourteen hands high: if above, or under, to carry or be allowed weight for inches, and to be entered on Friday the fifth, at the Swan, in Coleshill, by six in the evening. Also a plate of less value, to be run for by asses;" which, though by no means so noble a sport as the other, was, I doubt not, productive of the most mirth.

[1] Dated Sept. 11, A. D. 1711. Spectator, vol. iii. No. 173.

BOOK II.

RURAL EXERCISES GENERALLY PRACTISED.

CHAPTER I.

I. The English famous for their Skill in Archery.—II. The Use of the Bow known to the Saxons and the Danes.—III. Form of the Saxon Bow, &c.—IV. Archery improved by the Normans.—V. The Ladies fond of Archery.—VI. Observations relative to the Cross Bow.—VII. Its Form, and the Manner in which it was used.—VIII. Bows ordered to be kept.—IX. The Decay of Archery, and why.—X. Ordinances in its Favour;—The Fraternity of St. George established.—XI. The Price of Bows.—XII. Equipments for Archery.—XIII. Directions for its Practice.—XIV. The Marks to shoot at.—XV. The Length of the Bow and Arrows. XVI.—Extraordinary Performances of the Archers.—XVII. The modern Archers inferior to the ancient in long Shooting.—XVIII. The Duke of Shoreditch, why so called;—Grand Procession of the London Archers.—XIX. Archery a royal Sport;—A good Archer, why called Arthur.—XX. Prizes given to the Archers.

I.—SKILL OF THE ENGLISH IN ARCHERY.

Among the arts that have been carried to a high degree of perfection in this kingdom, there is no one more conspicuous than that of Archery. Our ancestors used the bow for a double purpose: in time of war, it was a dreadful instrument of destruction; and in peace it became an object of amusement. It will be needless to insist upon the skill of the English archers, or to mention their wonderful performances in the field of battle. The victories they obtained over their enemies are many and glorious; they are their best eulogiums, and stand upon record in the histories of this country for the perusal, and for the admiration of posterity. I shall therefore consider this subject in a general point of view, and confine myself, as much as possible, to such parts of it as relate to amusement only.

II.—THE BOW KNOWN TO THE ANGLO-SAXONS AND DANES.

The Anglo-Saxons, and the Danes, were certainly well acquainted with the use of the bow; a knowledge they derived at

an early period from their progenitors. The Scandinavian scalds, speaking in praise of the heroes of their country, frequently add to the rest of their acquirements a superiority of skill in handling of the bow.[1] It does not, however, appear, that this skill was extended beyond the purpose of procuring food or for pastime, either by the Saxons or by the Danes, in times anterior to the conquest. It is indeed said that Edmund, king of the East Angles, was shot to death with arrows by the Danes; but, if this piece of history be correct, it is no proof that they used the bow as a weapon of war. The action itself might be nothing more than a wanton piece of cruelty; and cruelty seems to have been a prominent feature in the character of those lawless plunderers.

III.—FORM OF THE SAXON BOW

Representations of the bow occur frequently in the Saxon manuscripts; and from one of them in the Cotton Library, written about the eighth century,[2] I have selected the following.

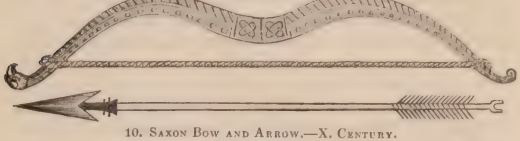
9. Two Saxon Archers—VIII. Century.

The one accompanied by his dog, is in search of the wild deer the other has no companion, but is depicted in the act of shooting at a bird; and from the adornment of his girdle, appears to

[1] Olaii Worm. Lit. Run. p. 129. Barthol. p. 420. Pontoppidan's Hist. Norway, p. 248.

[2] Claudius, B. iv.

have been no bad marksman. The first represents Esau going to seek venison for his father, and the second, Ishmael, after his expulsion from the house of Abraham, and residing in the desart.



10. Saxon Bow and Arrow.—X. Century.

This engraving is made from a manuscript of the tenth century in the Cotton Library.[1] The bow is curiously ornamented having the head and tail of a serpent carved at the ends; and was, probably, such a one as was used by the nobility. In all these bows we may observe one thing remarkable, that is, the string not being made fast to the extremities, but permitted to play at some distance from them. How far this might be more or less advantageous than the present method, I shall not presume to determine.

IV.—NORMAN ARCHERY.

It is well known that the Normans used the bow as a military weapon; and, under their government, the practice of archery was not only much improved, but generally diffused throughout the kingdom.

In the ages of chivalry the usage of the bow was considered as an essential part of the education of a young man who wished to make a figure in life. The heroes of romance are therefore usually praised for their skill in archery; and Chaucer, with propriety, says of sir Thopas "He was a good archere."[2]

V.—ARCHERY PRACTISED BY LADIES.

In the seventeenth century archery was much commended as an exercise becoming a gentleman to practise, and greatly conducive to health.[3] The ladies also were fond of this amusement, and by a previous representation[4] from an original drawing in a manuscript of the fourteenth century, we see it practised by one who has shot at a deer, and wounded it with great adroitness; and in

[1] Tiberius, C. vi. [2] Canterbury Tales.
[3] Peacham's Compleat Gentleman, p. 187. edit. 1622. [4] Engraving 4, p. 15.

another previous engraving[1] the hunting equipments of the female archers about the middle of the fifteenth century are represented

It was usual, when the ladies exercised the bow, for the beasts to be confined by large inclosures, surrounded by the hunters, and driven in succession from the covers to the stands, where the fair sportswomen were placed; so that they might readily shoot at them, without the trouble and fatigue of rousing and pursuing them.[2] It is said of Margaret, the daughter of Henry VII., that when she was on her way towards Scotland, a hunting party was made for her amusement in Alnwick Park, where she killed a buck with an arrow.[3] It is not specified whether the long-bow or the cross-bow was used by the princess upon this occasion; we are certain that the ladies occasionally shot with both, for when queen Elizabeth visited lord Montecute at Cowdrey, in Sussex, on the Monday, August 17, 1591, "Her highness tooke horse, and rode into the park, at eight o'clock in the morning, where was a delicate bowre prepared, under the which were her highness musicians placed; and a cross-bow, by a nymph, with a sweet song, was delivered into her hands, to shoote at the deere; about some thirty in number were put into a paddock, of which number she killed three or four, and the countess of Kildare one."[4]

VI.—THE CROSS-BOW.

The foregoing observations refer chiefly to the long-bow, so called, to distinguish it from the arbalist,[5] or cross-bow, which was not only much shorter than the former, but fastened also upon a stock, and discharged by the means of a catch or trigger, which probably gave rise to the lock on the modern musket. Bayle, explaining the difference between testimony and argument, uses this simile, "Testimony is like the shot of a long-bow, which owes its efficacy to the force of the shooter; argument is like the shot of a cross-bow, equally forcible, whether discharged by a dwarf or a giant."

I cannot pretend to determine at what period the cross-bow was first brought into this country, but I believe not long before the commencement of the thirteenth century; at least, I have never met with any representation of such an engine prior to

[1] Engraving 5, p. 15.
[2] See book i. ch. i. sec. xvii. p. 21.
[3] Leland's Collect. vol. iv. p. 278.
[4] Nichols's Progresses, vol. ii.
[5] Arcubalista in Latin, and also frequently steel bow in English, because the horns were usually made with steel.

that period. On the continent, where probably it originated, its appearance might be somewhat earlier. Our historians assure us that Richard I. was wounded by an arrow from a bow of this kind, while he was reconnoitring the walls of the castle of Chalezun; which wound was the occasion of his death. William Brito seems to attribute the introduction of the cross-bow to this monarch, who, he says, first showed it to the French.[1]

In the twenty-third year of the reign of Edward I. the earl of Warwick had in his army a number of soldiers called Ballistarii,[2] and this word is translated cross-bow men by our chronological writers, but certainly it may with equal propriety be rendered slingers, or casters of stones, who frequently formed a part of the Anglo-Norman armies.[3]

From this period we hear but little concerning the cross-bows, as military weapons, until the battle of Cressy in 1346; at which time they were used by a large body of Genoese soldiers, who were particularly expert in the management of these weapons, and assisted the French upon that memorable occasion; but their efforts were ineffectual when opposed to the archery of the English. Previous to the commencement of the battle there fell a sharp shower of rain, which wetted the strings of the cross-bows; and, we are told, in great measure prevented the archers from doing their usual execution;[4] but the strings of the long-bows used by the Englishmen do not appear to have been damaged in the least by the rain; this might arise from their being made with different materials; or more probably, from their being kept with the bows, in the bow-cases, during the continuance of the shower; for every man had a case of canvass, or of some such material, to draw over his bow when he had done using of it.[5]

In the succeeding annals the cross-bow is continually spoken of as a weapon of war. In 1347, the year after the celebrated victory was obtained at Cressy, Charles, earl of Blois, at the siege of le Roche de Rien, had no less than two thousand cross-bow men in his army. The cross-bow was used by the English soldiery chiefly at sieges of fortified places, and on shipboard, in battles upon the sea. But the great fame acquired by our

[1] Camden's Remains. [2] Nichol. Trivet. Annal.

[3] See Manners and Customs of the English, vol. i.

[4] Serres, and also most of our own historians. Froissart praises the skill of the Genoese cross-bowmen upon another occasion, saying, "They shot so surely, that lightly they myst not of their level." Vol. iv. chap. 38. fol. 47. English translation, [by Lord Berners,] and in several other places. [5] Ascham's Toxophilus.

countrymen in archery, was derived from their practice with the long-bow: and to this instrument they gave the preference.

VII.—FORM AND USE OF THE CROSS-BOW.

The reader may see the manner in which the cross-bow was formerly used, upon the following representation taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Royal Library.[1]

11. Practising with the Cross-Bow.

Below is an engraving from a painting on another manuscript in the Royal Library much more modern.[2]

12. Cross Bow Shooting at the Butts.—XVI. Century.

[1] 2 B. vii. [2] 19 C viii. dated 1496

Here we find exhibited a school for practice; and the manner in which the archers shot at the butts, or dead marks, a pastime frequently alluded to by the authors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the reign of Henry VII. the cross-bow was forbidden by law to be used;[1] and, soon after his son ascended the throne, it was found necessary to renew the prohibition;[2] yet, notwithstanding the interference of the legislature, in less than twenty years afterwards, the usage of cross-bows and hand-guns was so prevalent, that a new statute was judged necessary, which forbad the use of both, and inflicted a penalty of ten pounds for keeping a cross-bow in the house.[3] This severe fine might probably produce a temporary reformation; which certainly was not of long continuance, for cross-bows were commonly used again in the succeeding reigns. Hentzner tells us, that in the year 1598, he saw in the armory of the tower of London, cross-bows, and bows and arrows: of which, says he, to this day, the English make great use in their exercises. Stow speaks of a large close, called the Tazell, let in his time to the cross-bow-makers, wherein, he says, they used to shoot for games at the popinjay, which, Maitland tells us, was an artificial parrot.[4] In the present day, the cross-bow is seldom to be met with unless in the public armories. I have seen the cross-bow used in the country, for the purpose of shooting at the young rooks, to beat them out of their nests.

VIII.—BOWS AND ARROWS ORDERED TO BE KEPT.

But, to return from this digression: as far back as the thirteenth century, every person not having a greater annual revenue in land than one hundred pence, was obligated to have in his possession a bow and arrows, with other arms offensive and defensive; and all such as had no possessions, but could afford to purchase arms, were commanded to have a bow with sharp arrows, if they dwelt without the royal forests, and a bow with round-headed arrows, if they resided within the forests. The words of the statute are, "Ark et setes hors de foreste et en foreste ark et piles."[5] The word pile I believe is derived from the Latin,

[1] Stat. 29 Hen. VII. A. D. 1508.
[2] Stat. 6 Hen. VIII. cap. 13.
[3] Stat. 25 Hen. VIII. cap. 17.
[4] History of London, book ii. p. 482.
[5] Stat. temp. Ed. II. apud Winton.

pila, a ball; and I suppose these arrows were used to prevent the owners from killing the king's deer. The round-headed arrows were also called bolts, and also used with the cross-bow; hence the old adage, "A fool's bolt is soon shot," where the retort of an ignorant man is compared to the blunted arrow of an unskilful archer, shot off hastily, and without any aim. The proverb is thus versified by John Heywood,

> A fooles bolte is soone shot, and fleeth oftymes fer
> But the fooles bolte, and the marke, cum few times ner.[1]

It was also ordained by the forementioned statute that proper officers should be appointed to see that these weapons were kept in good order, and ready for immediate service.

IX.—DECAY OF ARCHERY.

Notwithstanding the manifest advantages accruing to the nation from the practice of archery, it seems to have been much neglected even at a time when the glory of the English archers was in its zenith, I mean in the reign of Edward III.; which occasioned that monarch to send a letter of complaint upon this subject to the sheriffs of London, declaring that the skill in shooting with arrows was almost totally laid aside, for the pursuit of various useless and unlawful games. He therefore commanded them to prevent such idle practices within the city and liberties of London; and to see that the leisure time upon holidays was spent in recreations with bows and arrows. In the thirty-ninth year of this reign, A. D. 1349, the penalty incurred by the offenders was imprisonment at the king's pleasure; the words of the letter are, "arcubus et sagittis vel pilettis aut boltis," with bow and arrows, or piles or bolts. The same command was repeated in the twelfth year of the reign of Richard II.; but probably its good effects were merely temporary. And in the fifth year of Edward IV. an ordinance was made, commanding every Englishman and Irishman dwelling in England, to have a long-bow of his own height; the act directs, that butts should be made in every township, at which the inhabitants were to shoot at up and down, upon all feast days, under the penalty of one halfpenny for every time they omitted to perform this exercise. This in the poetical legends is called "shooting about."

In the sixteenth century we meet with heavy complaints re-

[1] Heywood's Epigrams and Proverbs, 1566. No. 13.

specting the disuse of the long-bow, and especially in the vicinity of London. Stow informs us, "that before his time it had been customary at Bartholomew tide, for the lord mayor, with the sheriffs and aldermen, to go into the fields at Finsbury, where the citizens were assembled, and shoot at the standard, with broad and flight arrows, for games." I do not clearly understand the author's meaning in this passage, unless the word games may signify for sport sake. This exercise was continued for several days; but at the period in which our author lived it was practised only one afternoon, three or four days after the festival of Saint Bartholomew.[1]

The same writer attributes the decay of archery among the Londoners to the enclosures made near the metropolis, by which means the citizens were deprived of room sufficient or proper for the purpose; and his observations appear to have been justly founded, for a few years posterior to his death, a commission was granted by James I.[2] to many persons of quality; in which were recited and established the good statutes, ordinances, and proclamations, that had been previously made at different times in favour of archery. This commission extended to the prevention of enclosures in the grounds formerly used for the practice of the bow.

The commissioners were also impowered to survey the lands adjoining to the city of London, its suburbs, and within two miles circuit; and to reduce them to the same state and order for the use of the archers, as they stood at the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII.; and where they found any encroachments, to cause the banks to be thrown down, the ditches filled up, and the open spaces to be made level. Charles I. confirmed this commission, or granted another to the same purpose.

X.—ORDINANCES IN FAVOUR OF ARCHERY.—CROSS-BOWS, &c.

In the reign of Henry VIII. three several acts were made for promoting the practice of shooting with the long-bow; one, as we have already seen, prohibited the use of cross-bows and hand-guns: another was occasioned by a complaint from the bowyers, the fletchers, or arrow-makers, the stringers, and the arrow-head-makers, stating that many unlawful games were practised in the open fields, to the detriment of the public morals

[1] Stow's Survey of London, by Strype, vol. ii. p. 257. Stow died A. D. 1605.
[2] Ann. 8 Jacobi prim. Ibid.

and great decay of archery. Those games were therefore strictly prohibited by parliament; and a third act followed, which obliged every man, being the king's subject, to exercise himself in shooting with the long-bow; and also to keep a bow with arrows continually in his house. From this obligation were excepted such as were sixty years old, or by lameness or any other reasonable impediment claimed an exemption; and also all ecclesiastics, the justices of the two benches, or of the assizes, and the barons of the exchequer. Fathers and guardians were also commanded to teach the male children the use of the long-bow, and to have at all times bows provided for them as soon as they arrived at the age of seven years; and masters were ordered to find bows for their apprentices, and to compel them to learn to shoot with them upon holidays, and at every other convenient time. By virtue of the same act, every man who kept a cross-bow in his house was liable to a penalty of ten pounds.

Soon afterwards, that is, in the twenty-ninth year of the same king's reign, the use of cross-bows under certain restrictions was permitted, a patent being then granted by him to sir Christopher Morris, master of his ordinance, Anthony Knevyt and Peter Mewtas, gentlemen of his privy chamber, for them to be overseers of the science of artillery, by which was meant long-bows, cross-bows, and hand-guns. Others were appointed to be masters and rulers of the same science, with power to them and their successors, to establish a perpetual corporation, called the Fraternity of Saint George, and to admit such persons as they found to be eligible. The members of this society were also permitted, for pastime sake, to practise shooting at all sorts of marks and butts, and at the game of the popinjay, and other games, as at fowls and the like, in the city and suburbs of London, as well as in any other convenient places. There is the following remarkable proviso in this charter; "In case any person should be wounded, or slain in these sports, with an arrow shot by one or other of the archers, he that shot the arrow was not to be sued or molested, if he had, immediately before the discharge of the weapon, cried out, 'fast,' the signal usually given upon such occasions."[1]

I may just add, that in addition to the hand-guns, I meet with other instruments of like kind mentioned in the reign of

[1] Stow's Survey, by Strype, vol. i. p. 250.

Elizabeth, namely, demy hags, or hag butts. They shot with these engines not only at butts and other dead marks, but also at birds and beasts, using sometimes bullets and sometimes half shot;[1] but in the beginning of the seventeenth century the word artillery was used in a much more extensive sense, and comprehended long-bows, cross-bows, slur-bows, and stone-bows; also scorpions, rams, and catapults, which, the writer tells us, were formerly used; he then names the fire-arms as follows, cannons, basilisks, culverins, jakers, faulcons, minions, fowlers, chambers, harquebusses, calivers, petronils, pistols, and dags. "This," says he, "is the artillerië which is nowe in the most estimation, and they are divided into great ordinance, and into shot or guns," which proves that the use of fire-arms had then in great measure superseded the practice of archery.

XI.—PRICES ORDAINED FOR BOWS.

In the reign of Edward IV. an ordinance was established, which compelled the bowyers of London to sell the best bow-staves at three shillings and fourpence each; which was confirmed in the third year of Henry VII., and in the thirty-third year of his son Henry VIII.; but these acts were repealed in the third year of queen Mary, and the following prices were settled by the parliament: for a bow made of the best foreign yew, six shillings and eightpence; for an inferior sort, three shillings and fourpence; and for one made of English yew, two shillings.[2]

Notwithstanding the interference of the legislature in favour of archery, it gradually declined, and at the conclusion of the seventeenth century was nearly, if not altogether, discontinued. Yet, if we may credit a dull poem, written in the reign of Charles II.[3] some attempts were then made by the nobility to revive this manly pastime. I shall only quote the four following lines:—

> Forsake your lov'd Olympian games awhile,[4]
> With which the tedious minutes you beguile
> Wave quoits and nine-pins, those bear-garden sports,
> And follow shooting, often used at courts.

The "shooting," in the last line, means with the bow. It is to be observed, that the office of bow-bearer of Sherwood-forest

[1] Gesta Grayorum, fol. 18, printed 1594. Garrick's Collect. C. vol. 14.
[2] Maitland's London, book v. chap. i.
[3] "Archerye revived," by Robert Shotterel and Thomas D'Urfey, 1676; p. 53.
[4] Alluding, I presume, to tennice, or the balloon ball.

was continued to the year 1633; but it appears to have been a mere sinecure.[1]

In the present day the use of the musket is become so general, that archery, though it continues to be partially practised, has little chance of recovering its former popularity.

XII.—EQUIPMENT FOR ARCHERY.

Roger Ascham, an author well versed in the subject of archery, who lived in the reign of queen Elizabeth, informs us,[2] that it was necessary for the archer to have a bracer, or close sleeve, to lace upon the left arm; it was also proper for this bracer to be made with materials sufficiently rigid to prevent any folds which might impede the bow-string when loosed from the hand; to this was to be added a shooting-glove, for the protection of the fingers. The bow, he tells us, ought to be made with well-seasoned wood, and formed with great exactness, tapering from the middle towards each end. Bows were sometimes made of Brazil, of elm, of ash, and of several other woods; but eugh, or yew, had the sanction, from general experience, of superiority. Respecting the bow-string, the author was not decided which to prefer; those made with good hemp, according to the common usage of the time in which he lived, or those manufactured with flax, or silk; he therefore thinks the choice ought to be left to the string-maker. There are, he tells us, three essential parts in the composition of the arrow, that is to say, the stele or wand, the feathers, and the head. The stele was not always made with the same species of wood, but varied as occasion required, to suit the different manners of shooting practised by the archers; he commends sound ash for military arrows, and preferred it to asp, which in his day was generally used for the arrows belonging to the army; but for pastime, he thought that none were better than those made of oak, hard-beam, or birch; but after all, says he, in this point I hold it best to trust to the recommendation of an honest fletcher. The feathers from the wing of a goose, and especially of a grey-goose, he thought were preferable to any others for the pluming of an arrow. Thus in the popular ballad of Chevy Chace, an English

[1] Archaeologia, vol. vii. p. 58.

[2] In his "Toxophilus, or the schole of shooting," written in 1544, first published in 1571, republished by Mr. James Bennet in 1761.

archer aimed his arrow at sir Hugh Mountgomerye, with such skill, that it hit him on the breast, and the poet elegantly says,

> The grey-goose-vinge that was thereon
> In his hearts blood was wett.

The more ancient ballad upon this subject, given in the first volume of the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, reads, the "swane-feathers."

There was, it seems, but little difference between the two wings of one bird; but, according to the opinion of the best arrow-makers, the second feather was best in some cases and the pinion in others. It was necessary for an archer to have several arrows of one flight (I presume Ascham means of one shape, length, and weight), plumed with feathers from different wings, to suit the diversity of the winds. We are not from these directions to conclude, that the goose alone afforded the plumage for the arrows; the feathers of many other birds were used for the same purpose, and are mentioned in the metrical romances of the middle ages. An old ballad of Robin Hood says, that he and his followers had an hundred bows furnished with strings, and an hundred sheafs of goose arrows, with bright burnished heads; every arrow was an ell long, adorned with peacocks' feathers, and bound at the notching with white silk.[1]

> With them they had an hundred bowes,
> The stringes were well ydight;
> An hundred shefe of arrows good
> With hedes burnish'd full bryght;
> And every arrowe an ell longe,
> With peacocke well ydight,
> And nocked they were with white silk,
> It was a semely syght.

And Chaucer, in his description of the "squyers yeomen," says,

> And he was clad in cote and hode of grene,
> A shefe of pecocke arrowes bryght and shene;
> Under his belt he bare ful thriftely
> Well coude he dresse his tackle yomanly;
> His arrowes drouped not with fethers lowe,
> And in hande he bare a myghty bowe.[2]

The adornment of these arrows with peacocks' feathers is not

[1] "Geste of Robyn Hode." Garrick's Collect. K. vol. x.
[2] Prologue to Canterbury Tales

to be considered as a mere poetical flourish, for we have sufficient testimony, that such plumage was actually used.[1]

But, returning to our author, he informs us, that the English arrows had forked heads and broad-heads, yet he thought, that round pointed heads resembling a bodkin were the best. The notch, or small hollow part at the bottom of the arrow, made for the reception of the bow-string, was varied as occasion required, or at the will of the archer, being sometimes deep and narrow, and sometimes broad and not deep.

XIII.—DIRECTIONS FOR ARCHERY.

Having thus furnished the archer with his necessary accoutrements, Ascham proceeds to instruct him how they ought to be managed; but first of all he recommends a graceful attitude He should stand, says another writer, fairly, and upright with his body, his left foot at a convenient distance before his right; holding the bow by the middle, with his left arm stretched out, and with the three first fingers and the thumb of the right hand upon the lower part of the arrow affixed to the string of the bow.[2] In the second place, a proper attention was to be paid to the nocking, that is, the application of the notch at the bottom of the arrow to the bow-string; we are told that the notch of the arrow should rest between the fore-finger and the middle finger of the right hand.[3] Thirdly, our attention is directed to the proper manner of drawing the bow-string: in ancient times, says Ascham, the right hand was brought to the right pap; but at present it is elevated to the right ear, and the latter method he prefers to the former. The shaft of the arrow below the feathers, ought to be rested upon the knuckle of the fore-finger of the left hand; the arrow was to be drawn to the head, and not held too long in that situation, but neatly and smartly discharged, without any hanging upon the string. Among the requisites necessary to constitute a good archer, are a clear sight, steadily directed to the mark; and proper judgment, to determine the distance of the ground; he ought also to know how to take the advantage of a side wind, and to be well acquainted with what compass his arrows would require in their flight: courage is also an indispensable requisite, for whoever, says our author,

[1] Lib. Compotis Garderobæ sub an. 4 Ed. II. page 53, is this entry, Pro duodecim flecchiis cum pennis de pavonæ emptis pro rege, de 12 den.; that is, For twelve arrows plumed with peacocks' feathers, bought for the king, twelve pence. MS. Cott. Lib. Nero, C. viii.

[2] Country Contentments, 1615, chap. viii. p. 107.

[3] Ibid.

shoots with the least trepidation, he is sure to shoot badly. One great fault in particular he complains of, which young archers generally fall into, and that is, the direction of the eye to the end of the arrow, rather than to the mark; to obviate this evil habit he advises such, as were so accustomed, to shoot in the dark, by night, at lights set up at a proper distance for that purpose. He then concludes with observing, that "bad tutorage" was rarely amended in grown-up persons; and therefore he held it essentially necessary, that great attention should be paid to the teaching an archer properly, while he was young; "for children," says he, "if sufficient pains are taken with them at the onset, may much more easily be taught to shoot well, than men," because the latter have frequently more trouble to unlearn their bad habits, than was primitively requisite to learn them good ones.[1]

XIV.—MARKS FOR SHOOTING AT.

The marks usually shot at by the archers for pastime, were, "butts, prickes, and roavers." The butt, we are told, was a level mark, and required a strong arrow, with a very broad feather; the pricke was a "mark of compass," but certain in its distance; and to this mark strong swift arrows, of one flight, with a middling sized feather, were best suited; the roaver was a mark of uncertain length; it was therefore proper for the archer to have various kinds of arrows, of different weights, to be used according to the different changements made in the distance of the ground.[2]

The Cornish men are spoken of as good archers, and shot their arrows to a great length; they are also, says Carew, "well skilled in near shooting, and in well aimed shooting;—the butts made them perfect in the one, and the roaving in the other, for the prickes, the first corrupters of archery, through too much preciseness, were formerly scarcely known, and little practised."[3] Other marks are occasionally mentioned, as the standard, the target, hazel wands, rose garlands, and the popinjay, which, we are told, was an artificial parrot.[4] I have not met with such a mark in any manuscript delineation; but, in the following engraving, the reader will find a cock substituted for the parrot, and the archer has discharged his arrow very skilfully.

[1] Ascham, p. 129, et infra. [2] Country Contentments.
[3] Survey of Cornwall, by Richard Carew, Esq. 1602. B. i. p. 73.
[4] See sec. x. p. 57.

13. Archery.—XIV. Century.

I am by no means certain, whether the draughtsman designed to represent an artificial, or a living cock: the manner of its being placed on the post, may favour the first idea; but the mouth being open, and the elevation of the head, as if in the last gasp of life, will justify the latter. It is taken from a MS. written early in the fourteenth century, preserved in the Royal Library.[1]

XV.—LENGTH OF BOWS AND ARROWS.

The length of the bow is not clearly ascertained; those used by the soldiery appear, in the manuscript drawings, to have been as tall, at least, as the bearers; agreeable to an ordinance made in the fifth year of Edward IV. commanding every man to have a bow his own height; and they might, upon the average, be something short of six feet long. The arrows used by the English archers at the memorable battle of Agincourt, were a full yard in length.[2] Carew, in his survey of Cornwall, says, "The Cornish archers for long shooting, used arrows a cloth yard long." The old and more modern ballads of Chevy Chace speak of the arrow as being the length of a cloth yard, but some of these poetical legends extend it an ell.

Hall[3] mentions a company of archers, who met king Henry VIII. at Shooter's Hill, on a May-day morning, where they discharged their bows in his presence, and the arrows made a loud whistling in their flight, "by crafte of the heade." The strangeness of the noise, we are informed, surprised his Majesty, though at the same time he was much pleased with the contrivance. A modern author, the Hon. Daines Barrington, assures us, this sound was occasioned by holes being made in the arrow heads, and

[2] B. vii. [3] See most of our historians. [3] An. 7 Hen. VIII. fol. 56

that such weapons were used upon military occasions, and especially as signals;[1] but not, I presume, before the time mentioned by the historian; for had not those arrows been newly introduced, there is no reason why the king, who was well acquainted with every branch of archery, should have been surprised at the sound they made, or pleased at the sight of them.

XVI.—FEATS IN ARCHERY.

If the metrical romances and ballads of the former ages may be depended upon, the strength of our English archers in drawing of the bow, and their skill in directing the arrow to its mark, were justly the objects of admiration.

The reader, I trust, will pardon the insertion of the following extracts from two old poetical legends, which convey, at least, some idea of the practice of archery in times anterior to our own; the first is a ballad in eight fyttes or parts, entitled, "A mery Geste of Robyn Hode."[2] According to the story, the king[3] thought proper to pay Robin Hood a visit, disguised in the habit of an abbot: and the outlaw, by way of entertaining his guest, proposed a shooting match. Two wands were then set up, but at so great a distance from each other, that,

> By fyfty space our kyng sayde
> The markes were to longe.—
> On every syde a rose garlande,
> The shot under the lyne.
> Whoso faileth of the rose garland, said Robyn,
> His takyll he shal tyne;[4]
> And yelde it to his maister,
> Be it never so fine.—
> Twyse Robyn shot about,
> And ever he cleved the wande.—

And so did Gilbert, Little John, and Scathelocke, his companions; but,

> At the last shot, that Robyn shot,
> For all his frendes fore,
> Yet he fayled of the garland,
> Three fyngers and more—

[1] Archaeologia, vol. vii. p. 58.

[2] Black letter, without date. Imprinted at London upon the Three Crane Wharfe, by Willyam Copland. Garrick's Collect. Old Plays, K. vol. x. Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore, says, "There is a more ancient copy printed by Wynkin de Worde, preserved in the archives of the public library at Cambridge." Reliques of Ancien Poetry, vol. i.

[3] King Edward IV., I presume, is meant by the poet, for in one of the lines we read "Edward our comely kynge." Anachronisms of this kind were common enough in the old ballads.

[4] That is, he shall lose it, or rather, it shall be forfeited.

of course his "takill" was forfeited, which he presented to the king, saying,

Syr abbot, I deliver thee myne arrowe.

The second poem is also of the ballad kind, and apparently as old as the former,[1] wherein Adam Bell, Clym of the Clough, and William Cloudesle, are introduced to shoot before the king. The butts, or dead marks set up by the king's archers, were censured by Cloudesle, saying,

I hold hym never no good archer,
That shoteth at buttes so wide—

and having procured two "hasell roddes," he set them up at the distance of four hundred yards[2] from each other; his first attempt in shooting at them, contrary to the expectation of the king, was successful, for it is said,

Cloudesle with a bearyng arowe[3]
Clave the wand in two.

The king, being much surprised at the performance, told him he was the best archer he ever saw. Cloudesle then proposed to show him a more extraordinary proof of his skill, and tied his eldest son, a child only seven years old, to a stake, and placed an apple upon his head. When he bound his son he charged him not to move, and turned his face from him, that he might not be intimidated by seeing the arrow directed towards him: one hundred and twenty yards[4] were measured from the stake, and Cloudesle went to the end of the measurement; he first entreated the spectators to be silent,

And then drew out a fayre brode arrowe;
Hys bow was great and longe,
He set that arrowe in his bowe
That was both styffe and stronge.

Then Cloudesle cleft the apple in two,
As many a man myght se,
Over Gods forbode,[5] sayde the kynge,
That thou sholde shote at me.

[1] Black letter, without date, and printed also by Copland in Lothbury. Its title is, The Names of the Three Archers; the whole ballad, with some small variations, is in the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. i. p. 154, &c. This copy is bound up in the same volume of the Garrick Collection of Old Plays with the Geste of Robyn Hode.

[2] Twenty score paces, says the song.

[3] I rather think the poet meant an arrow shot "compass," for the pricke or wand was a "mark of compass," that is, the arrow in its flight formed the segment of a circle. See sec. xiv. p. 62.

[4] "Six score paces." Song.

[5] God forbid.

XVII.—SUPERIORITY OF ANCIENT BOWMEN.

If we were to judge of the merits of the ancient bowmen from the practice of archery as it is exercised in the present day, these poetical eulogiums would appear to be entirely fictitious. There are no such distances now assigned for the marks as are mentioned before, nor such precision, even at short lengths, in the direction of the arrows. By an act established An. 33 Hen. VIII., no person who had reached the age of twenty-four years, might shoot at any mark at less than two hundred and twenty yards distance.[1] I believe few, if any, of the modern archers, in shooting at a mark, exceed the distance of eighty or a hundred yards, or, in long shooting, reach four hundred yards. I have seen the gentlemen who practise archery in the vicinity of London, repeatedly shoot from end to end, and not touch the target with an arrow; and for the space of several hours, without lodging one in the circle of gold, about six inches diameter in the centre of the target: this, indeed, is so seldom done, that one is led to think, when it happens, it is rather the effect of chance than of skill: which proves what Ascham has asserted, that an archer should be well taught early in life, and confirm the good teaching by continual practice afterwards. We may also recollect, that archery is now followed for amusement only, and is to be commended as a manly and gentleman-like exercise.

I remember about four or five years back,[2] at a meeting of the society of archers, in their ground near Bedford Square, the Turkish ambassador paid them a visit; and complained that the enclosure was by no means sufficiently extensive for a long shot: he therefore went into the adjacent fields to show his dexterity; where I saw him shoot several arrows more than double the length of the archery ground, and his longest shot fell upwards of four hundred and eighty yards from his standing. The bow he used was much shorter than those belonging to the English archers; and his arrows were of the bolt kind, with round heads made of wood. This distance rather exceeds the length our rhymist has given to the wands set up by Cloudesle and his companions, but then we are to recollect they shot with vast precision to that distance,[3] which the ambassador did not, he had no mark, and his arrows fell exceedingly wide of each other.

[1] Archæologia, vol. i p. 58

[2] [Mr Strutt wrote this in 1800.]

[3] See sec. xvi. p. 65.

Carew, speaking of the Cornish archers two centuries back, says, "For long shooting, their shaft was a cloth yard in length, and their prickes twenty-four score paces, equal to four hundred and eighty yards; and for strength, they would pierce any ordinary armour;" he then adds, "and one Robert Arundell, whom I well knew, could shoot twelve score paces with his right hand, with his left, and from behind his head."[1] This puts me in mind of a curious anecdote related by Hall: "There came to his grace, king Henry the Eighth, a certayn man, with a bowe and arrowe, and he desyred his grace to take the muster of hym, and to see him shoote; for that tyme hys grace was contented; the man put hys one fote in his bosome, and so dyd shoote, and shote a very good shote, and well towardes hys marke; whereof, not onely his grace, but all others greatly merveyled; so the kynge gave him a rewarde,"[2] and for this curious feat he afterwards obtained the by-name of "Fote in Bosome."

XVIII.—THE DUKE OF SHOREDITCH.

The same monarch, Henry VIII., having appointed a great match of archery at Windsor, a citizen of London, named Barlow, an inhabitant of Shoreditch, joined the archers, and surpassed them all in skill; the king was so much pleased with his performance, that he jocosely gave him the title of "Duke of Shoreditch;" and this title the captain of the London archers retained for a considerable time afterwards. In 1583, in the reign of Elizabeth, a grand shooting match was held in London, and the captain of the archers assuming his title of Duke of Shoreditch, summoned a suit of nominal nobility, under the titles of marquis of Barlo, of Clerkenwell, of Islington, of Hoxton, of Shacklewell, and earl of Pancrass, &c. and these meeting together at the appointed time, with their different companies, proceeded in a pompous march from Merchant Taylors Hall, consisting of three thousand archers, sumptuously apparelled; Strype says, "odly habited;" every man had a long-bow, and four arrows. With the marquis of Barlo and the marquis of Clerkenwell were "Hunters who wound their horns."[3] Nine hundred and forty-two of the archers had chains of gold about

[1] Survey of Cornwall, 1602. [2] In vita Hen VIII. fol. 8.
[3] Stow's Survey, by Strype, vol. i. p. 250.

their necks. This splendid company was guarded by four thousand whifflers and billmen, besides pages and footmen. They passed through Broad-street, the residence of their captain, and thence into Moorfields, by Finsbury, and so on to Smithfield, where having performed several evolutions, they shot at a target for honour.[1]

Another cavalcade of like kind was made by the London archers in 1682, the reign of Charles II., and the king himself was present; but being a wet day, his majesty was obliged to leave the field soon after the arrival of the bowmen.[2]

XIX.—ROYAL SPORT—A GOOD ARCHER WHY CALLED ARTHUR.

Kings and princes have been celebrated for their skill in archery, and among those of our own country may be placed king Henry VII. who in his youth was partial to this exercise, and therefore it is said of him in an old poem, written in praise of the princess Elizabeth, afterwards queen to Henry VII.[3]

> See where he shoteth at the butts,
> And with hym are lordes three;
> He weareth a gowne of velvette blacke,
> And it is coted above the knee.

He also amused himself with the bow after he had obtained the crown, as we find from an account of his expenditures,[4] where the following memorandums occur: "Lost to my lord Morging at buttes, six shillings and eightpence:" and again, "Paid to sir Edward Boroughe thirteen shillings and fourpence, which the kynge lost at buttes with his cross-bowe." Both the sons of king Henry followed his example, and were excellent archers; and especially the eldest, prince Arthur, who used frequently to visit the society of London bowmen at Mile-end, where they usually met, and practised with them. From his expertness in handling of the bow, every good shooter was called by his name. The captain also of the fraternity was honoured with the title of Prince Arthur, and the other archers were styled his knights.[5] The title of Prince Arthur seems to have been superseded by the creation of the "Duke of Shoreditch."

After the death of prince Arthur, his brother Henry continued

[1] Strype's London, vol. i. p. 250.
[2] MS. Harl. 365, fol. 96.
[3] An. 7 et 9 Hen. VII. MS. in the Remembrancer's Office. See also Appendix to Dr. Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. vi.
[4] Archæologia, vol. vii.

to honour the meeting at Mile-end with his presence. We have seen already, that he was exceedingly fond of archery, and if Hall may be credited, at the time of his coming to the crown, "he shotte as strong, and as greate a lengthe as any of his garde."[1]

King Edward VI., though not so conspicuous as his father or his uncle, was nevertheless an encourager of archery, and frequently amused himself with the bow. This appears from his own diary.[2]

Charles I. was an archer, as appears from the dedication of a treatise, called the "Bowman's Glory;" and Catherine of Portugal, queen to Charles II., was probably much pleased with seeing the pastime of archery practised; for in compliment to her, a badge of silver, weighing twenty-two ounces, was made for the marshal of the fraternity of bowmen, having upon it the representation of an archer with his bow drawn in the action of shooting, and inscribed with her name, "Reginæ Catharinæ Sagittarii." This badge was made in the year 1676, by the contribution of sir Edward Hungerford and others.[3]

XX.—PRIZES FOR ARCHERY.

I find but little said respecting the rewards bestowed upon the best bowmen; the London fraternity are said to have shot for pastime or for honour; however, I make no doubt, upon particular trials of skill, rewards sufficient to excite the emulation of the archers were proposed; they might sometimes consist of money, and perhaps more frequently of some other valuable article, as the following lines may testify, extracted from the Mery Geste of Robyn Hode, and the prize is judiciously appropriated to the purpose. The poet tells us, that the sherif of Notyngham,

Did crye a ful fayre playe
That all the best archyres of the north
Should come upon a daye;
And they that shote, al of the best,
The prize should bear away.
And he that shoteth al of the best,
Furthest, fayre and lowe,
At a payre of goodly buttes,
Under the grene wood shaw

[1] In Life of Hen. VIII. 1511, fol. 8.
[2] Archæologia, vol. vii
[3] Ency. Brit.

A ryght good arrowe he shal have,
The shaft of sylver whyte,
The head, and fethers of riche red gold,
In England is none lyke.—
And when they came to Notyngham,
The buttes were fayre and longe.—
Thrise Robin shot about
And alway he cleft the wand.

It is added, that to him was delivered the "goode arrowe, for best worthie was he."

CHAPTER II.

I. Slinging of Stones an ancient Art.—II. Known to the Saxons.—III. And the Normans.—IV. How practised of late Years.—V. Throwing of Weights and Stones with the Hand.—VI. By the Londoners.—VII. Casting of the Bar and Hammer.—VIII. Of Spears.—IX. Of Quoits.—X. Swinging of Dumb Bells.—XI. Foot Races.—XII. The Game of Base.—XIII. Wrestling much practised formerly.—XIV. Prizes for.—XV. How performed.—XVI. Swimming.—XVII. Sliding.—XVIII. Skating.—XIX. Rowing.—XX. Sailing.

I.—SLINGING OF STONES.

The art of slinging, or casting of stones with a sling, is of high antiquity, and probably antecedent to that of archery, though not so generally known nor so universally practised. The tribe of Benjamin among the Israelites is celebrated in holy writ for the excellency of its slingers. In the time of the judges there were seven hundred Benjamites who all of them used their left hands, and in the figurative language of the Scripture it is said, they "could sling stones at an hair-breadth and not miss,"[1] that is, with exceedingly great precision. Again we are told, that when David fled to Ziklag, he was joined by a party of valiant men of the tribe of Benjamin, who could use both the right and the left in slinging of stones and shooting arrows out of a bow.[2] David himself was also an excellent marksman, as the destruction of Goliath by the means of his sling sufficiently testifies. It was, perhaps, an instrument much used by the shepherds in ancient times, to protect their flocks from the attacks of ferocious animals: if so, we shall not wonder that David, who kept his father's sheep, was so expert in the management of this weapon.[3] In Barclay's Eclogues an English shepherd boasts of his skill in using of the sling.

II.—SLINGING BY THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

The art of slinging of stones was well known and practised at a very early period in Europe, but we have no authority to prove that it was carried to so high a pitch of perfection in this part of the globe, as it appears to have been among the Asiatic nations. It is altogether uncertain, whether the ancient inha-

[1] Judges, chap. xx. ver. 16.
[2] 1 Chron. chap. xii. ver. 2.
[3] 1 Samuel, chap. xvii. and xviii.

bitants of Britain were acquainted with the use of the sling or not; if the negative be granted, which hardly seems reasonable, we must admit the probability of their being taught the properties of such an instrument by the Romans, who certainly used it as a military weapon. We can speak more decidedly on the part of our ancestors the Saxons, who seem to have been skilful in the management of the sling; its form is preserved in several of their paintings, and the manner in which it was used by them, as far back as the eighth century, may be seen below, from a manuscript of that age in the Cotton Library.[1] It is there represented with one of the ends unloosened from the hand and the stone discharged. In the original the figure is throwing the stone at a bird upon the wing, which is represented at some distance from him.

14. Slinging—VIII. Century.

In other instances we see it depicted with both the ends held in the hand, the figure being placed in the action of taking his aim, and a bird is generally the object of his exertion, as in the following engraving from a parchment roll in the Royal Library, containing a genealogical account of the kings of England, to the time of Henry III.[2]

[1] Claudius, B. iv. [2] 14. B. v.

15. Manner of holding the Sling.

Sometimes the sling is attached to a staff or truncheon, about three or four feet in length, wielded with both hands, and charged with a stone of no small magnitude. These slings appear to have been chiefly used in besieging of cities, and on board of ships in engagements by sea. The following engraving represents a sling of this kind, from a drawing supposed to have been made by Matthew Paris, in a MS. at Bennet' College, Cambridge.[1]

16. Slings of Warfare.

III.—SLINGING BY THE ANGLO-NORMANS.

We have sufficient testimony to prove that men armed with slings formed a part of the Anglo-Norman soldiery,[2] and the word Balistarii, used by our early historians, may, I doubt not, be more properly rendered slingers than cross-bowmen; though indeed, upon the introduction of the cross-bow, these men might take the place of the slingers. In fact the cross-bow itself was modified to the purpose of discharging of stones, and for that reason was also called a stone-bow, so that the appellation Balistarius and Arcubalistarius were both of them latterly applied to the same person. The sling, however, was not entirely superseded by the bow at the commencement of the fifteenth century, as the following verses plainly indicate: they occur in a manuscript poem in the Cotton Library,[3] entitled, "Knyghthode

[1] C. v. 16. [2] Manners and Customs of the English, vol. i.
[3] Titus A. xxiii. part 1, fol. 8.

and Batayle," written about that time, which professedly treats upon the duties and exercises necessary to constitute a good soldier.

> Use eek the cast of stone, with slynge or honde:
> It falleth ofte, yf other shot there none is,
> Men harneysed in steel may not withstonde,
> The multitude and mighty cast of stonys;
> And stonys in effecte, are every where,
> And slynges are not noyous for to beare.

By the two last lines the poet means to say, that stones are every where readily procured, and that the slings are by no means cumbersome to the bearers, which were cogent reasons for retaining them as military weapons; neither does he confine their use to any body or rank of soldiers, but indiscriminately recommends the acquirement of skill in the casting of stones, to every individual who followed the profession of a warrior.

IV.—MODERN MODES OF SLINGING.

I remember in my youth to have seen several persons expert in slinging of stones, which they performed with thongs of leather, or, wanting those, with garters; and sometimes they used a stick of ash or hazel, a yard or better in length, and about an inch in diameter; it was split at the top so as to make an opening wide enough to receive the stone, which was confined by the re-action of the stick on both sides, but not strong enough to resist the impulse of the slinger. It required much practice to handle this instrument with any great degree of certainty, for if the stone in the act of throwing quitted the sling either sooner or later than it ought to do, the desired effect was sure to fail. Those who could use it properly, cast stones to a considerable distance and with much precision. In the present day, the use of all these engines seems to be totally discontinued.

V.—THROWING WITH THE HAND.

Throwing of heavy weights and stones with the hand was much practised in former times, and as this pastime required great strength and muscular exertion, it was a very proper exercise for military men. The Greeks, according to Homer, at the time of the siege of Troy, amused themselves with casting of the discus, which appears to have been a round flat plate of metal of considerable magnitude and very heavy.[1] The discus

[1] Iliad, book xxiii.

of the ancients," says Dr. Johnson,[1] "is sometimes called in English quoit, but improperly. The game of quoits is a game of skill; the discus was only a trial of strength, as among us to throw the hammer."

VI.—THROWING BY THE LONDONERS.

In the twelfth century we are assured, that among the amusements practised by the young Londoners on holidays, was casting of stones,[2] darts, and other missive weapons. Bars of wood and iron were afterwards used for the same purpose, and the attention of the populace was so much engaged by this kind of exercise, that they neglected in great measure the practice of archery, which occasioned an edict to be passed in the thirty-ninth year of Edward III. prohibiting the pastimes of throwing of stones, wood, and iron, and recommending the use of the long-bow upon all convenient opportunities.[3]

VII.—CASTING OF THE BAR AND HAMMER.

Casting of the bar is frequently mentioned by the romance writers as one part of a hero's education, and a poet of the sixteenth century thinks it highly commendable for kings and princes, by way of exercise, to throw "the stone, the barre, or the plummet." Henry VIII., after his accession to the throne, according to Hall and Holinshead, retained "the casting of the barre" among his favourite amusements. The sledge hammer was also used for the same purpose as the bar and the stone; and among the rustics, if Barclay be correct, an axletree.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century, these pastimes seem to have lost their relish among the higher classes of the people, and for this reason Peacham, describing a complete gentleman, speaks of throwing the hammer as an exercise proper only for soldiers in camp, or for the amusement of the king's guard, but by no means "beseeming of nobility."

VIII.—THROWING OF SPEARS.

Throwing of spears and javelins being properly a military exercise, was not prohibited by the act above mentioned. It was sometimes practised as a trial of strength, when the attempt was to throw beyond a certain boundary, or to exceed a com

[1] In his Dictionary, under *quoit*.
[2] Fitzstephen's Description of London.
[3] Rot. claus. Memb. 23.

petitor in distance; and of skill, when the spear was cast at a quintain, or any other determined mark. According to Fitzstephen, it was one of the holiday sports of the young Londoners in the reign of Henry II. With them it seems to have been an exertion to cast the weapon farthest. The pastime is frequently mentioned by the writers of the middle ages. Charles VI. of France and the lords of his court, after a grand entertainment, were amused with "Wrastling, and casting of the bar, and the dart, by Frenchmen and the Gascoyns."[1]

IX.—QUOITS.

The game of quoits, or coits, as an amusement, is superior to any of the foregoing pastimes; the exertion required is more moderate, because this exercise does not depend so much upon superior strength as upon superior skill. The quoit seems evidently to have derived its origin from the ancient discus, and with us in the present day it is a circular plate of iron perforated in the middle, not always of one size, but larger or smaller to suit the strength or conveniency of the several candidates. It is further to be observed, that quoits are not only made of different magnitudes to suit the poise of the players, but sometimes the marks are placed at extravagant distances, so as to require great strength to throw the quoit home; this, however, is contrary to the general rule, and depends upon the caprice of the parties engaged in the contest.

To play at this game, an iron pin, called a hob, is driven into the ground, within a few inches of the top; and at the distance of eighteen, twenty, or more yards, for the distance is optional, a second pin of iron is also made fast in a similar manner; two or more persons, as four, six, eight, or more at pleasure, who divided into two equal parties are to contend for the victory, stand at one of the iron marks and throw an equal number of quoits to the other, and the nearest of them to the hob are reckoned towards the game. But the determination is discriminately made: for instance, if a quoit belonging to A lies nearest to the hob, and a quoit belonging to B the second, A can claim but one towards the game, though all his other quoits lie nearer to the mark than all the other quoits of B; because one quoit of B being the second nearest to the hob, cuts out, as it is called, all behind it: if no such quoit had interfered, then A would

[1] Froissart, Lord Berners' translation, vol. iv. chap. 149, fol. 184.

have reckoned all his as one each. Having cast all their quoits, the candidates walk to the opposite side, and determine the state of the play, then taking their stand there, throw their quoits back again and continue to do so alternately as long as the game remains undecided.

Formerly in the country, the rustics not having the round perforated quoits to play with, used horse-shoes, and in many places the quoit itself, to this day, is called a shoe.

X.—DUMB BELLS.

John Northbroke, in a Treatise against Dicing, Dancing, &c. written in the time of queen Elizabeth, advises young men, by way of amusement, to "labour with poises of lead or other metal;" this notable pastime, I apprehend, bore some resemblance to the Skiomachia,[1] or fighting with a man's own shadow, mentioned in one of the Spectators:[2] "It consisted," says the author, "in brandishing of two sticks, grasped in each hand and loaden with plugs of lead at either end;—this pastime opens the chest, exercises the limbs, and gives a man all the pleasure of boxing without the blows." It is sometimes practised in the present day, and called "ringing of the dumb bells."

XI.—FOOT-RACING.

There is no kind of exercise that has more uniformly met the approbation of authors in general than running. In the middle ages, foot-racing was considered as an essential part of a young man's education, especially if he was the son of a man of rank, and brought up to a military profession.

It is needless, I doubt not, to assert the antiquity of this pastime, because it will readily occur to every one, that variety of occasions continually present themselves, which call forth the exertions of running even in childhood; and when more than one person are stimulated by the same object, a competition naturally takes place among them to obtain it. Originally, perhaps, foot-races had no other incitement than emulation, or at best the prospect of some small reward: but in process of time the rewards were magnified, and contests of this kind were instituted as public amusements; the ground marked out for that purpose, and judges appointed to decide upon the fairness of the race, to ascertain the winner, and to bestow the reward.

[1] Σκιομαχια. [2] Vol. ii. No. 115.

In former times, according to Commenius,[1] it was customary for the places appropriated to pedal races to be railed in on either side, and the prize-giver stood at the goal, to deliver the reward to the person who should first touch it. I suppose he means at the Olympic games, among which foot-racing was one. In the present day foot-races are not much encouraged by persons of fortune, and seldom happen but for the purpose of betting, and the racers are generally paid for their performance. In many instances the distance does not exceed one hundred yards. At fairs, wakes, and upon many other occasions where many people are assembled together, this species of amusement is sometimes promoted, but most frequently the contest is confined to the younger part of the concourse.

Two centuries back running, according to Peacham, was thought to be an exercise by no means derogatory to the rank of nobility;[2] and a poetical writer in the Cotton manuscript, "Of Knyghthode and Batayle," before cited,[3] written early in the fifteenth century, recommends it strongly to the practice of the soldiery: his words are these,

> In rennynge the exercise is good also,
> To smyte first in fight, and also whenne,
> To take a place our foemen will forrenne
> And take it erst, also, to serche or sture,
> Lightly to come and go, rennynge is sure.
> Rennyng is also right good at the chase,
> And for to lepe a dike is also good;
> For mightily what man may renne and lepe,
> May well devict, and safe is party kepe.

XII.—BASE, OR PRISONERS' BARS.

There is a rustic game called Base or Bars, and sometimes written Bays,[4] and in some places Prisoners' Bars; and as the success of this pastime depends upon the agility of the candidates and their skill in running, I think it may properly enough be introduced here. It was much practised in former times, and some vestiges of the game are still remaining in many parts of the kingdom. The first mention of this sport that I have met with occurs in the Proclamations at the head of the parliamentary proceedings, early in the reign of Edward III., where it is spoken of as a childish amusement, and prohibited to be played in the

[1] Orbis sensualium Pictus.
[2] Compleat Gentleman, 1622.
[3] Titus A. xxiii. part i. page 6. See p. 73, sec. iii.
[4] Johnson's Dictionary, word *Base*.

avenues of the palace at Westminster,[1] during the sessions of Parliament, because of the interruption it occasioned to the members and others in passing to and fro as their business required. It is also spoken of by Shakespear as a game practised by the boys:

> He with two striplings, lads more like to run
> The country base, than to commit such slaughter,
> Made good the passage.[2]

It was, however, most assuredly played by the men, and especially in Cheshire and other adjoining counties, where formerly it seems to have been in high repute.

The performance of this pastime requires two parties of equal number, each of them having a base or home, as it is usually called, to themselves, at the distance of about twenty or thirty yards. The players then on either side taking hold of hands, extend themselves in length, and opposite to each other, as far as they conveniently can, always remembering that one of them must touch the base; when any one of them quits the hand of his fellow and runs into the field, which is called giving the chase, he is immediately followed by one of his opponents; he again is followed by a second from the former side, and he by a second opponent; and so on alternately, until as many are out as choose to run, every one pursuing the man he first followed, and no other; and if he overtake him near enough to touch him, his party claims one toward their game, and both return home. They then run forth again and again in like manner, until the number is completed that decides the victory; this number is optional, and I am told rarely exceeds twenty. It is to be observed, that every person on either side who touches another during the chase, claims one for his party, and when many are out, it frequently happens that many are touched.

About 1770, I saw a grand match at base played in the fields behind Montague House, now the British Museum, by twelve gentlemen of Cheshire against twelve of Derbyshire, for a considerable sum of money, which afforded much entertainment to the spectators. In Essex they play this game with the addition of two prisons, which are stakes driven into the ground, parallel with the home boundaries, and about thirty yards from them; and every person who is touched on either side in the chase,

[1] "Nul enfaunt ne autres ne jue—a barres." Rot. Parl. MS. Harl. 7057.
[2] Cymbeline.

is sent to one or other of these prisons, where he must remain till the conclusion of the game, if not delivered previously by one of his associates, and this can only be accomplished by touching him, which is a difficult task, requiring the performance of the most skilful players, because the prison belonging to either party is always much nearer to the base of their opponents than to their own; and if the person sent to relieve his confederate be touched by an antagonist before he reaches him, he also becomes a prisoner, and stands in equal need of deliverance. The addition of the prisons occasions a considerable degree of variety in the pastime, and is frequently productive of much pleasantry.

XIII.—WRESTLING.

The art of wrestling, which in the present day is chiefly confined to the lower classes of the people, was, however, highly esteemed by the ancients, and made a very considerable figure among the Olympic games. In the ages of chivalry, to wrestle well was accounted one of the accomplishments which a hero ought to possess.

Wrestling is a kind of exercise that, from its nature, is likely to have been practised by every nation, and especially by those the least civilised. It was probably well known in this country long before the introduction of foreign manners. The inhabitants of Cornwall and Devon have, we are well assured, from time immemorial, been celebrated for their expertness in this pastime, and are universally said to be the best wrestlers in the kingdom. To give a Cornish hug is a proverbial expression. The Cornish, says Fuller, are masters of the art of wrestling, so that if the Olympian games were now in fashion, they would come away with the victory. Their hug is a cunning close with their fellow-combatants, the fruits whereof is his fair fall or foil at the least.[1] They learned the art at an early period of life, for you shall hardly find, says Carew, an assembly of boys in Devon and Cornwall, where the most untowardly among them will not as readily give you a muster (or trial) of this exercise as you are prone to require it.[2]

The citizens of London, in times past, are said to have been expert in the art of wrestling, and annually upon St. James's day they were accustomed to make a public trial of their skill.

[1] Worthies of England in Cornwall, p. 197. [2] Survey of Cornwall, 1602, p. 7 v.

In the sixth year of Henry III. they held their anniversary meeting for this purpose near the hospital of St. Matilda, at St. Giles's in the fields, where they were met by the inhabitants of the city and suburbs of Westminster, and a ram was appointed for the prize; the Londoners were victorious, having greatly excelled their antagonists, which produced a challenge from the conquered party, to renew the contest upon the Lammas day following at Westminster: the citizens of London readily consented, and met them accordingly, but in the midst of the diversion, the bailiff of Westminster and his associates took occasion to quarrel with the Londoners, a battle ensued, and many of the latter were severely wounded in making their retreat to the city. This unjustifiable petulance of the bailiff gave rise to a more serious tumult, and it was several days before the peace could be restored.[1] Stow informs us, that in the thirty-first year of Henry VI., A. D. 1453, at a wrestling match near Clerkenwell, another tumult was excited against the lord mayor, but he does not say upon what occasion it arose.

In old time, says Stow, wrestling was more used than it has been of later years.[2] In the month of August, about the feast of St. Bartholomew, adds this very accurate historian, there were divers days spent in wrestling; the lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs, being present in a large tent pitched for that purpose near Clerkenwell;[3] upon this occasion the officers of the city, namely, the sheriffs, serjeants, and yeomen, the porters of the king's beam or weighing-house,[4] and others of the city, gave a general challenge to such of the inhabitants of the suburbs as thought themselves expert in this exercise; but of late years, continues he, the wrestling is only practised on the afternoon of St. Bartholomew's day.[5] The latter ceremony is thus described by a foreign writer, who was an eye-witness to the performance: "When," says he, "the mayor goes out of the precincts of the city, a sceptre,[6] a sword, and a cap, are borne before him, and he is followed by the principal aldermen in scarlet gowns with golden chains; himself and they on horseback. Upon their arrival at a place appointed for that purpose, where a tent is pitched for their reception, the mob begin to wrestle before them

[1] Matthew Paris. Hist. Ang. sub an. 1222. [2] Survey of London, p. 78, 85.
[3] The margin says, "at Skinner's Well."
[4] There are now, says the author, no such men, meaning "the porters of the king's beam," that is, at the commencement of the seventeenth century.
[5] Survey of London, p. 85. [6] I presume he means the mace.

two at a time." He adds a circumstance not recorded by the historian: "After this is over, a parcel of live rabbits are turned loose among the crowd, which are pursued by a number of boys, who endeavour to catch them with all the noise they can make."[1]

From the time that wrestling became unfashionable and was rarely practised by persons of opulence, it declined also among the populace, but by slower degrees; and at present is seldom seen except at wakes and fairs, where it still continues to be partially exhibited.

XIV.—PRIZES FOR WRESTLING.

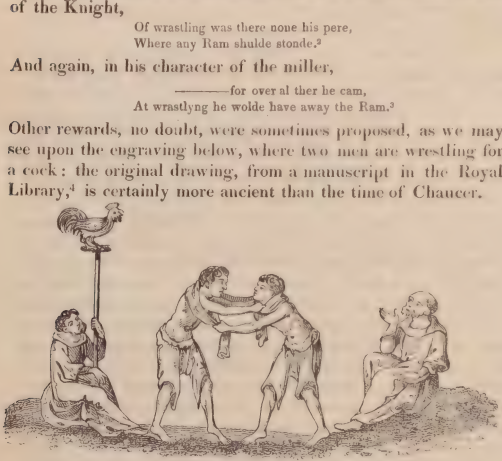
We may have observed, that the reward proposed for the best wrestlers in the contest between the Londoners and the inhabitants of Westminster, as mentioned above, was a ram. Anciently this animal was the prize most usually given upon such occasions, and therefore in the rhyme of sir Thopas, Chaucer says of the Knight,

> Of wrastling was there none his pere,
> Where any Ram shulde stonde.[2]

And again, in his character of the miller,

> ——— for over al ther he cam,
> At wrastlyng he wolde have away the Ram.[3]

Other rewards, no doubt, were sometimes proposed, as we may see upon the engraving below, where two men are wrestling for a cock: the original drawing, from a manuscript in the Royal Library,[4] is certainly more ancient than the time of Chaucer.



17. ANCIENT WRESTLING.

[1] Hentzner's Itinerary, first published A. D. 1598 Lord Orford's translation, Strawberry Hill edition, p. 36.
[2] Canterbury Tales. [3] Prologues to the Canterbury Tales. [4] 2 B. viii.

In modern times the prizes were not only much varied, but were occasionally of higher value. If we may believe the author of the old poem, entitled "A mery Geste of Robyn Hode," there were several prizes put up at once. The poet, speaking of a knight who was going to Robin Hood, says,[1]

——Unto Bernisdale,
As he went, by a bridge was a wrastlinȝ,
And there taryed was he,
And there was all the best yemen,
Of all the west countrey.
A full fayre game there was set up;
A white bull, up ypyght;
A great coursȝr with sadle and brydle,
With gold burnished full bryght:
A payre of gloves, a red gold ringe,
A pipe of wine, good faye:
What man bereth him best, ywis,
The prise shall bear away.

A humorous description is given in one of the Spectators of a country wake: the author there mentions "a ring of wrestlers; the squire," says he, "of the parish always treats the whole company, every year, with a hogshead of ale, and proposes a beaver hat, as a recompence to him who gives the most falls."[2]

XV.—WRESTLING, HOW PERFORMED.

18. Another Representation.

The manner in which this pastime was exhibited in the western parts of England, at the distance of two centuries, is thus described by Carew, an author then living. "The beholders then cast, or form themselves into a ring, in the empty space whereof the two champions step forth, stripped into their dublets and hosen, and untrussed, that they may so the better command the use of their lymmes; and first shaking hands, in token of friendship, they fall presently to the effect of anger; for each striveth

[1] Second fit, or part, Garrick's Collect. Old Plays, K. vol. x.
[2] Vol. ii. No. 161, published 1711.

how to take hold of the other with his best advantage, and to bear his adverse party downe; wherein, whosoever overthroweth his mate, in such sort, as that either his backe, or the one shoulder, and contrary heele do touch the ground, is accounted to give the fall. If he be only endangered, and makes a narrow escape, it is called a foyle."

He then adds, "This pastime also hath his laws, for instance; of taking hold above the girdle—wearing a girdle to take hold by—playing three pulls for trial of the mastery, the fall giver to be exempted from playing again with the taker, but bound to answer his successor. Silver prizes, for this and other activities, were wont to be carried about, by certain circumferanci, or set up at bride ales; but time, or their abuse," perhaps I might add both, "hath now worn them out of use."[1]

The Greeks had a pastime called Hippas,[2] which, we are told, was one person riding upon the shoulders of another, as upon a horse;[3] a sport of this kind was in practice with us at the commencement of the fourteenth century, but generally performed by two competitors who struggled one with the other, and he who pulled his opponent from the shoulders of his carrier was the victor.

19.

The representations of this curious pastime are taken from different manuscripts; one in the Royal Library,[4] and the other in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, dated 1344.[5]

[1] Survey of Cornwall, 1602, p. 75. [2] Ἵππας. [3] Pollux, lib. ix. cap. 7.
[4] 2, B. vii. [5] 2464, Bod. 264.

20.

This seems to bear more analogy to wrestling than to any other sport, for which reason I have given it a place in the present chapter.

XVI.—SWIMMING.

Swimming is an exercise of great antiquity; and, no doubt, familiar to the inhabitants of this country, at all times. The heroes of the middle ages are sometimes praised for their skill in swimming: it is said of Olaf Fryggeson, a king of Norway, that he had no equal in his art.[1] Peacham, describing the requisites for a complete gentleman, mentions swimming as one; and particularly recommends it to such as were inclined to follow a military profession. In this he seems to have followed an old poetical writer,[2] who speaks in this manner:—

> To swymme, is eke to lerne in sommer leson.
> Men fynde not a bridge, so often as a flood,
> Swymmyng to voyde; and chase an hoste wil eson.
> Eke after rayne the rivers goeth wood,[3]
> That every man in t'host can swymme, is good:
> Knyght, squyer, footman, cook, and cosynere,
> And grome, and page, in swymmyng is to lere.

Meaning thereby, that the art of swimming ought to be learned by every class of persons belonging to an army: and, perhaps, it may not be improper to add, by every other person also.

Swimming and diving are mentioned by the author of the Visions of Pierce Ploughman,[4] in the following manner:—

[1] Pontoppidan's Hist. of Norway, p. 146.
[2] MS. Cott. Titus, A. xxiii.
[3] Wood, or wode, signifies wild or mad; and here, that the rain makes the rivers swell and overpass their bounds.
[4] Edit. 1550, p. 13.

Take two strong men and in Temese[1] cast them,
And both naked as a needle, ther non sikerer[2] than other;
The one hath cunnynge and can swymme and dyve,
The other is lewed of that laboure, lerned never to swym,
Which trowest of these two in Temese is most in dred,
He that never dived ne nought can of swymmyng,
Or the swymmer that is safe if he himself lyke?

Boys in the country usually learn to swim with bundles of bull-rushes, and with corks where the rushes cannot readily be procured; particularly in the neighbourhood of London, where we are told, two centuries back, there were men who could teach the art of swimming well, and, says the author, "for commoditie of river and water for that purpose, there is no where better."[3]

I am sorry to add, that swimming is by no means so generally practised with us in the present day as it used to be in former times. We have several treatises on the art of swimming and diving, and in the Encyclopædia Britannica are many excellent directions relating to it, under the article Swimming.

XVII.—SLIDING.

Sliding upon the ice appears to have been a very favourite pastime among the youth of this country in former times; at present the use of skates is so generally diffused throughout the kingdom, that sliding is but little practised, except by children and such as cannot afford to purchase them.

Sliding is one of the diversions ascribed to young men of London by Fitzstephen, and, as far as one can judge from his description of the sport, it differed not in the performance from the method used by the boys of our own time; but he adds another kind of pastime upon the ice that is not now in practice: his words are to this effect, "Others make a seat of ice as large as a millstone, and having placed one of their companions upon it, they draw him along, when it sometimes happens that moving on slippery places they all fall down headlong." Instead of these seats of ice, among the moderns, sledges are used, which being extended from a centre, by the means of a strong rope, those who are seated in them are moved round with great velocity, and form an extensive circle. Sledges of this kind were set upon the Thames during the hard frost, in the year 1716, as the fol-

[1] The river Thames.

[2] Sikerer, surer, safer; that is, neither the one nor the other should have any extraneous assistance, but each should depend entirely upon his own exertions to escape from the water.

[3] History of all the schools and colleges in and about London, printed A. D. 1615.

lowing couplet in a song written upon that occasion[1] plainly proves:

> While the rabble in sledges run giddily round,
> And nought but a circle of folly is found.

XVIII.—SKATING.

Skating is by no means a recent pastime, and probably the invention proceeded rather from necessity than the desire of amusement.

It is the boast of a northern chieftain, that he could traverse the snow upon skates of wood.[2] I cannot by any means ascertain at what time skating made its first appearance in England, but we find some traces of such an exercise in the thirteenth century, at which period, according to Fitzstephen, it was customary in the winter, when the ice would bear them, for the young citizens of London to fasten the leg bones of animals under the soles of their feet by tying them round their ancles, and then taking a pole shod with iron into their hands, they pushed themselves forward by striking it against the ice, and moved with celerity equal, says the author, to a bird flying through the air, or an arrow from a cross-bow; but some allowance, I presume, must be made for the poetical figure: he then adds, "at times, two of them thus furnished agree to start opposite one to another, at a great distance; they meet, elevate their poles, attack, and strike each other, when one or both of them fall, and not without some bodily hurt; and, even after their fall, are carried a great distance from each other, by the rapidity of the motion, and whatever part of the head comes upon the ice, it is sure to be laid bare.'

The wooden skates shod with iron or steel, which are bound about the feet and ancles like the talares of the Greeks and Romans, were most probably brought into England from the Low Countries, where they are said to have originated, and where it is well known they are almost universally used by persons of both sexes when the season permits. In Hoole's translation of the Vocabulary by Commenius, called Orbis Sensualium Pictus, the skates are called scrick-shoes from the German, and in the print at the head of the section, in that work, they are represented longer than those of the present day, and the irons are turned up much higher in the front.

[1] In D'Urfey's Collection of Songs, 1719, vol. iii. p. 4.
[2] Olai. Worm. Lit. Run. p. 129.

Some modern writers have asserted, that "the metropolis of Scotland has produced more instances of elegant skaters than perhaps any other country whatever, and the institution of a skating-club, about forty years ago, has contributed not a little to the improvement of this amusement."[1] I have, however, seen, some years back, when the Serpentine river in Hyde Park was frozen over, four gentlemen there dance, if I may be allowed the expression, a double minuet in skates, with as much ease, and I think more elegance, than in a ball room; others again, by turning and winding with much adroitness, have readily in succession described upon the ice the form of all the letters in the alphabet.

XIX.—ROWING.

I shall not pretend to investigate the antiquity of boat-rowing. This art was certainly well understood by the primitive inhabitants of Britain, who frequently committed themselves to the mercy of the sea in open boats, constructed with wicker work, and covered with leather.[2] The Saxons were also expert in the management of the oar, and thought it by no means derogatory for a nobleman of the highest rank to row or steer a boat with dexterity and judgment. Kolson, a northern hero, boasting of his qualifications, declares, that "he was expert in handling the oar."[3] The reader may possibly call to his recollection the popular story related by our historians concerning Edgar, surnamed the Peaceable, who they tell us was conveyed in great state along the river Dee, from his palace in the city of West Chester, to the church of St. John, and back again: the oars were managed by eight kings, and himself, the ninth, sat at the stern of the barge and held the helm.[4] This frolic, for I cannot consider it in any other light, appears to be well attested, and is the earliest record of a pastime of the kind.

The boat-quintain and tilting at each other upon the water, which were introduced by the Normans as amusements for the summer season,[5] could not be performed without the assistance of the oars, and probably much of the success of the champion depended upon the skilfulness of those who managed the boat. If we refer to two engravings[6] whereon both these sports are

[1] Ency. Brit. art. Skating.
[2] Cæsar Bell. Gall. lib. v. cap. 12.
[3] Bartholin, p. 420.
[4] Will. Malms. Mat. West. in the reign of Edgar.
[5] Fitzstephen's Description of London. Stow's Survey.
[6] See book iii. chap. i. sec. v.

represented, we shall see that the rowers are seated contrary to the usual method, and face the head of the vessel instead of the stern.

The institution of the water pageantry at London upon the lord mayor's day, was of an essential service to the professed watermen, who plied about the bridge; and gave occasion to the introduction of many pleasure boats, which in the modern times have been greatly increased. The first procession to Westminster by water was made A. D. 1453, by John Norman, then lord mayor, for which he was highly commended by the watermen.

When tilting at the quintain and justing one against another in boats upon the water were discontinued in this country, rowing matches were substituted, and are become exceedingly popular: we may see them frequently exhibited upon the Thames during the summer season; and as these contests, which depend upon skill as well as upon strength, are rarely productive of any thing further than mere pastime, they are in my opinion deservedly encouraged. When a rowing-match takes place near London, if the weather be fine, it is astonishing to see what crowds of people assemble themselves upon the banks of the Thames as spectators, and the river itself is nearly covered with wherries, pleasure boats, and barges, decorated with flags and streamers, and sometimes accompanied with bands of music. This pastime, though very ancient, and frequently practised upon solemn occasions by the Greeks and the Romans, does not seem to have attracted the notice of our countrymen in former times.

It may be thought unnecessary for me to mention the well-known annual legacy of Thomas Dogget, a comedian of some celebrity at the commencement of the last century, which provides three prizes to be claimed by three young watermen, on condition they prove victorious in rowing from the Old Swan Stairs near London Bridge, to the White Swan at Chelsea. The contest takes place upon the first of August; the number of competitors upon this occasion is restricted to six, who must not have been out of their times beyond twelve months. Every man rows singly in his boat, and his exertions are made against the tide; he who first obtains his landing at Chelsea receives the prize of honour, which is a waterman's coat, ornamented with a large badge of silver, and therefore the match is usually called "Rowing for the Coat and Badge." The second and the third

candidates have small pecuniary rewards, but the other three get nothing for their trouble.

Of late years the proprietor of Vauxhall Gardens, and Astley the rider, give each of them in the course of the summer a new wherry, to be rowed for by a certain number of watermen, two of which are allowed to row in one boat; and these contests are extended to two or three heats or trials before the successful candidates are determined.

XX.—SAILING.

Another popular amusement upon the water is sailing, and many persons have pleasure boats for this purpose; I do not mean the open boats which are usually let out for hire by the boat-builders for the purpose of sailing, but vessels of much greater magnitude, that are covered with a deck, and able with skilful management to weather a rough storm; many large bets are frequently dependant upon the swiftness of these boats, and the contest is sometimes determined at sea.

A society, generally known by the appellation of the Cumberland Society, consisting of gentlemen partial to this pastime, give yearly a silver cup to be sailed for in the vicinity of London. The boats usually start from the bridge at Blackfriars, go up the Thames to Putney, and return to Vauxhall, where a vessel is moored at a distance from the stairs, and the sailing boat tha first passes this mark upon her return obtains the victory.

CHAPTER III.

I. Hand ball an ancient Game.—The Ball, where said to have been invented.—II. Used by the Saxons—III. And by the Schoolboys of London.—IV. Ball Play in France.—V. Tennis Courts erected.—VI. Tennis fashionable in England.—VII. A famous Woman Player.—VIII. Hand-ball played for Tansy Cakes.—IX. Fives.—X. Balloon-ball.—XI. Stool-ball.—XII. Hurling.—XIII. Foot-ball;—Camp-ball.—XIV. Goff;—Cambuc;—Bandy-ball.—XV. Stow-ball.—XVI. Pall-mall.—XVII. Ring-ball.—XVIII. Club-ball.—XIX. Cricket.—XX. Trap-ball.—XXI. Northen-spell.—XXII. Tip-cat.

I.—HAND BALL.

THE ball has given origin to many popular pastimes, and I have appropriated this chapter to such of them as are or have been usually practised in the fields and other open places. The most ancient amusement of this kind, is distinguished with us by the name of hand-ball, and is, if Homer may be accredited, coeval at least with the destruction of Troy. Herodotus attributes the invention of the ball to the Lydians;[1] succeeding writers have affirmed, that a female of distinction named Anagalla, a native of Corcyra, was the first who made a ball for the purpose of pastime, which she presented to Nausica, the daughter of Alcinous, king of Phœacia, and at the same time taught her how to use it;[2] this piece of history is partly derived from Homer, who introduces the princess of Corcyra with her maidens, amusing themselves at hand-ball:

> O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play,
> Their shining veils unbound, along the skies,
> Toss and retoss, the ball incessant flies.[3]

Homer has restricted this pastime to the young maidens of Corcyra, at least he has not mentioned its being practised by the men; in times posterior to the poet, the game of hand-ball was indiscriminately played by both sexes.

II.—ANGLO-SAXON BALL PLAY.

IT is altogether uncertain at what period the ball was brought into England: the author of a manuscript in Trinity College, Oxford, written in the fourteenth century, and containing the

[1] Lib. i. [2] Ælian, lib. ii. Volaterranus, lib. xxix. [3] Odyssey, by Pope, b. v

life of Saint Cuthbert,[1] says of him, that when he was young, "he pleyde atte balle with the children that his fellowes were." On what authority this information is established I cannot tell. The venerable Bede, who also wrote the life of that saint, makes no mention of ball play, but tells us he excelled in jumping, running, wrestling, and such exercises as required great muscular exertion,[2] and among them, indeed, it is highly probable that of the ball might be included.

III.—LONDON BALL PLAY.

Fitzstephen, who wrote in the thirteenth century, speaking of the London school-boys, says, "Annually upon Shrove Tuesday, they go into the fields immediately after dinner, and play at the celebrated game of ball;[3] every party of boys carrying their own ball;" for it does not appear that those belonging to one school contended with those of another, but that the youth of each school diverted themselves apart. Some difficulty has been stated by those who have translated this passage, respecting the nature of the game at ball here mentioned. Stowe, considering it as a kind of goff or brandy-ball, has, without the least sanction from the Latin, added the word bastion,[4] meaning a bat or cudgel; others again have taken it for foot-ball,[5] which pastime, though probably known at the time, does not seem to be a very proper one for children: and indeed, as there is not any just authority to support an argument on either side, I see no reason why it should not be rendered hand-ball.[6]

IV.—BALL PLAY IN FRANCE.

The game of hand-ball is called by the French palm play,[7] because, says St. Foix, a modern author, originally "this exercise consisted in receiving the ball and driving it back again with the palm of the hand. In former times they played with the naked hand, then with a glove, which in some instances was lined; afterwards they bound cords and tendons round their hands to make the ball rebound more forcibly, and hence the

[1] No. lvii. [2] "Sive enim saltu, sive cursu, sive luctatu,' &c. Vita Sancti Cudbereti, cap. i. [3] "Lusum pilæ celebrem." Stephanides de ludis.

[4] "The scholars of each school have their ball or bastion in their hands.' Survey of London.

[5] Lord Lyttelton, History of Henry the Second, vol. iii. p.275; and [Dr. Pegge] the translator of Fitzstephen, in 1772.

[6] By the word celebrem Fitzstephen might advert to the antiquity of the pastime.

[7] Jeu de paume, and in Latin pila palmaria.

racket derived its origin." [1] During the reign of Charles V. palm play, which may properly enough be denominated hand-tennis, was exceedingly fashionable in France, being played by the nobility for large sums of money; and when they had lost all that they had about them, they would sometimes pledge a part of their wearing apparel rather than give up the pursuit of the game. The duke of Burgundy, according to an old historian,[2] having lost sixty franks at palm play with the duke of Bourbon, Messire William de Lyon, and Messire Guy de la Trimouille, and not having money enough to pay them, gave his girdle as a pledge for the remainder; and shortly afterwards he left the same girdle with the comte D'Eu for eighty franks, which he also lost at tennis.

V.—TENNIS-COURTS.

At the time when tennis play was taken up seriously by the nobility, new regulations were made in the game, and covered courts erected, wherein it might be practised without any interruption from the weather. In the sixteenth century tennis-courts were common in England, and the establishment of such places countenanced by the example of the monarchs. In the Vocabulary of Commenius,[3] we see a rude representation of a tennis-court divided by a line stretched in the middle, and the players standing on either side with their rackets ready to receive and return the ball, which the rules of the game required to be stricken over the line. Hence the propriety of Heywoode's proverb, "Thou hast stricken the ball under the line;" meaning he had failed in his purpose.[4]

VI.—TENNIS FASHIONABLE IN ENGLAND.

We have undoubted authority to prove that Henry VII. was a tennis player. In a MS. register of his expenditures made in the thirteenth year of his reign, and preserved in the Remembrancer's Office, this entry occurs: "Item, for the king's loss at tennis, twelvepence; for the loss of balls, threepence." Hence one may infer, that the game was played abroad, for the loss of the balls would hardly have happened in a tennis-court. His son Henry, who succeeded him, in the early part of his reign was much attached to this diversion; which propensity, as Hall assures

[1] Essais historiques sur Paris, vol. i. p. 160. [2] Laboureur. Sub an. 1368.
[3] Published by Hoole, 1658. [4] John Heywoode's works, London, 1566.

ns,[1] being perceived by certayne craftie persons about him, they brought in Frenchmen and Lombards to make wagers with hym, and so he lost muche money; but when he perceyved theyr crafte, he eschued the company and let them go." He did not however give up the amusement, for we find him, according to the same historian, in the thirteenth year of his reign, playing at tennis with the emperor Maximilian for his partner, against the prince of Orange and the marquis of Brandenborow; "the earl of Devonshire stopped on the prince's side, and the lord Edmond on the other side; and they departed even handes on both sides, after eleven games fully played."[2] Among the additions that king Henry VIII. made to Whitehall, if Stowe be correct, were "divers fair tennis-courts, bowling-allies, and a cockpit."[3]

James I., if not himself a tennis player, speaks of the pastime with commendation, and recommends it to his son as a species of exercise becoming a prince.[4] Charles II. frequently diverted himself with playing at tennis, and had particular kind of dresses made for that purpose. So had Henry VIII. In the wardrobe rolls we meet with tenes-cotes for the king, also tennis-drawers and tennis-slippers.[5]

VII.—A FAMOUS WOMAN PLAYER.

A French writer speaks of a damsel named Margot, who resided at Paris in 1424, and played at hand-tennis with the palm, and also with the back of her hand, better than any man; and what is most surprising, adds my author, at that time the game was played with the naked hand, or at best with a double glove.[6]

VIII.—HAND-BALL PLAY FOR TANSY CAKES.

Hand-ball was formerly a favourite pastime among the young persons of both sexes, and in many parts of the kingdom it was customary for them to play at this game during the Easter holidays for tansy cakes; but why, says Bourne, they should prefer hand-ball at this time to any other pastime, or play it particularly for a tansy cake, I have not been able to find out.[7] The learned Selden conceives the institution of this reward to have originated from the Jewish custom of eating bitter herbs at the time of the passover.[8]

[1] In the life of Henry VIII. the second year of his reign, fol. 11. [2] Ibid. fol. 98.
[3] Survey of London, p. 496. [4] Basilicon Doron, b. iii.
[5] MSS. Harl. 2248 and 627 b. [6] St. Foix Essais Historiques sur Paris, vol. i. p. 160.
[7] Antiquities of the Common People, chap. xxiv. [8] Table Talk, art. Christmas.

Anciently the mayor, aldermen, and sheriff of Newcastle, accompanied with a great number of burgesses, used to go every year at the feasts of Easter and Whitsuntide to the Forth, the little Mall of the town, with the mace, the sword, and the cap of maintenance carried before them. The young people still continue to assemble there at those seasons particularly, and play at hand-ball, or dance, but are no longer countenanced by the presence of their governors.[1]

Fuller mentions the following proverbial saying used by the citizens of Chester, "when the daughter is stolen shut Pepper Gate," which he thus explains: "The mayor of the city had his daughter, as she was playing at ball with other maidens in Pepper-street, stolen away by a young man through the same gate, whereupon he caused it to be shut up."[2]

IX.—FIVES.

Hand-tennis still continues to be played, though under a different name, and probably a different modification of the game: it is now called fives, which denomination perhaps it might receive from having five competitors on each side, as the succeeding passage seems to indicate. In 1591, when queen Elizabeth was entertained at Elvetham in Hampshire, by the earl of Hertford, "after dinner, about three o'clock, ten of his lordship's servants, all Somersetshire men, in a square greene court before her majesties windowe, did hang up lines, squaring out the forme of a tennis-court, and making a cross line in the middle; in this square they (being stript out of their dublets) played five to five with hand-ball at bord and cord as they tearme it, to the great liking of her highness."[3]

X.—BALLOON-BALL.

The balloon or wind-ball resembled the follis of the Romans. The follis was a large ball of leather, blown full of wind, and beaten backwards and forwards with the fist, and seems to have been much played with.

"Folle decet pueros ludere, folle senes."[4]

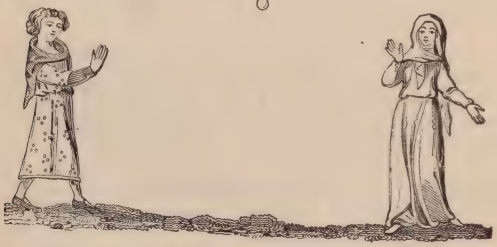
The balloon-ball, was a large ball made of double leather, which being filled with wind by means of a ventil, says Commenius,[5]

[1] Mr. Brand, in his additions to Bourne.
[2] Fuller's Worthies, published 1662, p. 188.
[3] Progresses of Q. Eliz. by Mr. Nichols, vol. ii. p. 19.
[4] Martial, lib. iv. Epig. 45. [5] Orbis Sensualium Pictus, cap. 133.

was driven to and fro by the strength of men's arms; and for this purpose every one of the players had a round hollow bracer of wood to cover the hand and lower part of the arm, with which he struck the ball. This pastime was usually practised in the open fields, and is much commended for the healthiness of the exercise it afforded. The balloon-ball seems certainly to have originated from the hand-ball, and was, I apprehend, first played in England without the assistance of the bracer; this supposition will be perfectly established if it be granted, and I see no reason why it should not, that the four figures represented below are engaged in the balloon-ball play: the original delineation occurs in a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Royal Library.[1]

21. Balloon-Ball.—XIV. Century.

The following engraving represents a gentleman and lady playing at hand-ball, and as far as one can judge from the representation, the pastime consisted in merely beating the ball from one to the other.



22. Hand-Ball.—XIV. Century.

[1] 20. D. iv.

These figures are taken from a manuscript in the Harleian Library,[1] nearly, if not altogether, coeval in point of antiquity with the former. The balls are unlike each other; that in the engraving No. 20 is the largest, and bears the marking of the seams.

XI.—STOOL-BALL.

Stool-ball is frequently mentioned by the writers of the three last centuries, but without any proper definition of the game. Doctor Johnson tells us,[2] it is a play where balls are driven from stool to stool, but does not say in what manner or to what purpose. I have been informed, that a pastime called stool-ball is practised to this day in the northern parts of England, which consists in simply setting a stool upon the ground, and one of the players takes his place before it, while his antagonist, standing at a distance, tosses a ball with the intention of striking the stool; and this it is the business of the former to prevent by beating it away with the hand, reckoning one to the game for every stroke of the ball; if, on the contrary, it should be missed by the hand and touch the stool, the players change places. I believe the same also happens if the person who threw the ball can catch and retain it when driven back, before it reaches the ground. The conqueror at this game is he who strikes the ball most times before it touches the stool. Again, in other parts of the country a certain number of stools are set up in a circular form, and at a distance from each other, and every one of them is occupied by a single player; when the ball is struck, which is done as before with the hand, every one of them is obliged to alter his situation, running in succession from stool to stool, and if he who threw the ball can regain it in time to strike any one of the players, before he reaches the stool to which he is running, he takes his place, and the person touched must throw the ball, until he can in like manner return to the circle.

Stool-ball seems to have been a game more properly appropriated to the women than to the men, but occasionally it was played by the young persons of both sexes indiscriminately; as the following lines from a song written by D'Urfey for his

[1] No. 6563. [2] In his Dictionary; word *stool*.

play of Don Quixote, acted at Dorset Gardens in 1694,[1] sufficiently indicate:

Down in a vale on a summer's day,
All the lads and lasses met to be merry;
A match for kisses at stool-ball to play,
And for cakes, and ale, and sider, and perry.

Chorus. Come all, great small, short tall, away to stool-ball.

XII. HURLING.

Hurling is an ancient exercise, and seems originally to have been a species of the hand-ball; it was played by the Romans with a ball called harpastum, a word probably derived from harpago, to snatch or take by violence. The contending parties endeavoured to force the ball one from the other, and they who could retain it long enough to cast it beyond an appointed boundary were the conquerors. The inhabitants of the western counties of England have long been famous for their skill in the practice of this pastime. There were two methods of hurling in Cornwall, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, and both are particularly described by Carew, a contemporary writer,[2] whose words are these: "Hurling taketh his denomination from throwing of the ball, and is of two sorts; in the east parts of Cornwall to goales, and in the west to the country. For hurling to goales there are fifteen, twenty, or thirty players, more or less, chosen out on each side, who strip themselves to their slightest apparell and then join hands in ranke one against another; out of these rankes they match themselves by payres, one embracing another, and so passe away, every of which couple are especially to watch one another during the play; after this they pitch two bushes in the ground, some eight or ten feet asunder, and directly against them, ten or twelve score paces off, other twain in like distance, which they terme goales, where some indifferent person throweth up a ball, the which whosoever can catch and carry through his adversaries goale, hath wonne the game; but herein consisteth one of Hercules his labours, for he that is once possessed of the ball, hath his contrary mate waiting at inches and assaying to lay hold upon him, the other thrusteth him in the breast with his closed fist to keep him off,

[1] See also his Pills to purge Melancholy, vol. i. p. 91

[2] Survey of Cornwall, 1602, book i. p. 73.

which they call *butting*." According to the laws of the game, "they must hurle man to man, and not two set upon one man at once. The hurler against the ball must not *but* nor *hand-fast* under the girdle, he who hath the ball must *but* only in the other's breast, and deale no fore ball, that is, he may not throw it to any of his mates standing nearer to the goale than himself." In hurling to the country, "two or three, or more parishes agree to hurl against two or three other parishes. The matches are usually made by gentlemen, and their goales are either those gentlemen's houses, or some towns or villages three or four miles asunder, of which either side maketh choice after the nearnesse of their dwellings; when they meet there is neyther comparing of numbers nor matching of men, but a silver ball is cast up, and that company which can catch and carry it by force or slight to the place assigned, gaineth the ball and the victory. Such as see where the ball is played give notice, crying 'ware east,' 'ware west,' as the same is carried. The hurlers take their next way over hilles, dales, hedges, ditches; yea, and thorow bushes, briars, mires, plashes, and rivers whatsoever, so as you shall sometimes see twenty or thirty lie tugging together in the water scrambling and scratching for the ball."

About the year 1775, the hurling to the goals was frequently played by parties of Irishmen, in the fields at the back of the British Museum, but they used a kind of bat to take up the ball and to strike it from them; this instrument was flat on both sides, and broad and curving at the lower end. I have been greatly amused to see with what facility those who were skilful in the pastime would catch up the ball upon the bat, and often run with it for a considerable time, tossing it occasionally from the bat and recovering it again, till such time as they found a proper opportunity of driving it back amongst their companions, who generally followed and were ready to receive it. In other respects, I do not recollect that the game differed materially from the description above given. The bat for hurling was known and probably used in England more than two centuries ago, for it is mentioned in a book published in the reign of queen Elizabeth,[1] and is there called "a clubbe" or "hurle batte."

[1] "Philogamus," black letter, without date.

XIII. FOOT-BALL—CAMP-BALL.

Foot-ball is so called because the ball is driven about with the feet instead of the hands. It was formerly much in vogue among the common people of England, though of late years it seems to have fallen into disrepute, and is but little practised. I cannot pretend to determine at what period the game of foot-ball originated; it does not however, to the best of my recollection, appear among the popular exercises before the reign of Edward III., and then, in 1349, it was prohibited by a public edict;[1] not, perhaps, from any particular objection to the sport in itself, but because it co-operated, with other favourite amusements, to impede the progress of archery.

When a match at foot-ball is made, two parties, each containing an equal number of competitors, take the field, and stand between two goals, placed at the distance of eighty or an hundred yards the one from the other. The goal is usually made with two sticks driven into the ground, about two or three feet apart. The ball, which is commonly made of a blown bladder, and cased with leather, is delivered in the midst of the ground, and the object of each party is to drive it through the goal of their antagonists, which being achieved the game is won. The abilities of the performers are best displayed in attacking and defending the goals; and hence the pastime was more frequently called a goal at foot-ball than a game at foot-ball. When the exercise becomes exceeding violent, the players kick each other's shins without the least ceremony, and some of them are overthrown at the hazard of their limbs.

Barclay in his fifth eclogue[2] has these lines.

> ——— The sturdie plowmen lustie, strong and bold,
> Overcometh the winter with driving the foote-ball,
> Forgetting labour and many a grievous fall.

And a more modern poet, Waller,

> As when a sort of lusty shepherds try
> Their force at foot-ball; care of victory
> Makes them salute so rudely breast to breast,
> That their encounter seems too rough for jest.

The danger attending this pastime occasioned king James to say, "From this court I debarre all rough and violent ex-

[1] See sec. ix. p. 55. [2] Ship of Fools, 1508.

ercises, as the foot-ball, meeter for lameing than making able the users thereof."[1]

The rustic boys made use of a blown bladder without the covering of leather by way of foot-ball, putting peas and horse beans withinside, which occasioned a rattling as it was kicked about·

> — And nowe in the winter, when men kill the fat swine,
> They get the bladder and blow it great and thin,
> With many beans and peason put within:
> It ratleth, soundeth, and shineth clere and fayre,
> While it is throwen and caste up in the ayre,
> Eche one contendeth and hath a great delite
> With foote and with hande the bladder for to smite;
> If it fall to grounde, they lifte it up agayne,
> And this waye to labour they count it no payne.[2]

"It had been the custom," says a Chester antiquary,[3] "time out of mind, for the shoemakers yearly on the Shrove Tuesday, to deliver to the drapers, in the presence of the mayor of Chester, at the cross on the Rodehee,[4] one ball of leather called a foote-ball, of the value of three shillings and fourpence or above, to play at from thence to the Common Hall of the said city; which practice was productive of much inconvenience, and therefore this year (1540), by consent of the parties concerned, the ball was changed into six glayves of silver of the like value, as a reward for the best runner that day upon the aforesaid Rodehee."

In an old comedy, the Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green, by John Day,[5] one of the characters speaks thus of himself: "I am Tom Stroud of Hurling, I'll play a gole at camp-ball, or wrassel a fall a the hip or the hin turn." Camp-ball, I conceive, is only another denomination for foot-ball, and is so called, because it was played to the greatest advantage in an open country. The term may probably be a contraction of the word campaign.

XIV.—GOFF—CAMBUC—BANDY-BALL.

There are many games played with the ball that require the assistance of a club or bat, and probably the most ancient among them is the pastime now distinguished by the name of goff. In the northern parts of the kingdom goff is much practised. It requires much room to perform this game with pro-

[1] Basilicon Doron, book iii. [2] Barclay ut supra.
[3] I rather think the elder Randel Holmes, one of the city heralds, MS. Harl. 2150, fol. 235. [4] An open place near the city. See p. 42. [5] Acted A.D. 1659.

priety, and therefore I presume it is rarely seen at present in the vicinity of the metropolis. It answers to a rustic pastime of the Romans which they played with a ball of leather stuffed with feathers, called paganica, because it was used by the common people: the goff-ball is composed of the same materials to this day: I have been told it is sometimes, though rarely, stuffed with cotton. In the reign of Edward III. the Latin name cambuca[1] was applied to this pastime, and it derived the denomination, no doubt, from the crooked club or bat with which it was played; the bat was also called a bandy, from its being bent, and hence the game itself is frequently written in English bandy-ball. Below are two figures engaged at bandy-ball, and the form of the bandy, as it was used early in the fourteenth century, from a MS. book of prayers beautifully illuminated and written about that time, in the possession of Francis Douce Esq.

23. Bandy-Ball.—XIV. Century.

Goff, according to the present modification of the game, is performed with a bat, not much unlike the bandy: the handle of this instrument is straight, and usually made of ash, about four feet and a half in length; the curvature is affixed to the bottom, faced with horn and backed with lead; the ball is a little one, but exceedingly hard, being made with leather, and, as before observed, stuffed with feathers. There are generally two players, who have each of them his bat and ball. The game consists in driving the ball into certain holes made in the ground; he who achieves it the soonest, or in the fewest number of strokes, obtains the victory. The goff-lengths, or the spaces between the first and last holes, are sometimes extended to the distance of two or three miles; the number of intervening holes

[1] Cambuta vel cambuca. Baculus incurvatus, a crooked club or staff: the word cambuca was also used for the virga episcopalis, or episcopal crosier, because it was curved at the top. Du Cange, Glossary, in voce *cambuta*.

appears to be optional, but the balls must be struck into the holes, and not beyond them; when four persons play, two of them are sometimes partners, and have but one ball, which they strike alternately, but every man has his own bandy.

It should seem that goff was a fashionable game among the nobility at the commencement of the seventeenth century, and it was one of the exercises with which prince Henry, eldest son to James I., occasionally amused himself, as we learn from the following anecdote recorded by a person who was present:[1] "At another time playing at goff, a play not unlike to pale-maille, whilst his schoolmaster stood talking with another, and marked not his highness warning him to stand farther off, the prince thinking he had gone aside, lifted up his goff-club to strike the ball; mean tyme one standing by said to him, 'beware that you hit not master Newton:' wherewith he drawing back his hand, said, 'Had I done so, I had but paid my debts.'"

XV.—STOW-BALL.

A pastime called stow-ball is frequently mentioned by the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which, I presume, was a species of goff, at least it appears to have been played with the same kind of ball. In Littleton's Latin and English Dictionary, under the word *paganica*, the goff-ball and the stow-ball are the same.

XVI.—PALL-MALL.

According to the author, in the reign of James I., quoted above, pall-mall was a pastime not unlike goff, but if the definition of the former given by Cotgrave be correct, it will be found to differ materially from the latter, at least as it was played in modern times. "Pale-maille," says he, "is a game wherein a round box ball is struck with a mallet through a high arch of iron, which he that can do at the fewest blows, or at the number agreed upon, wins." It is to be observed, that there are two of these arches, that is, "one at either end of the alley." The game of mall was a fashionable amusement in the reign of Charles II., and the walk in St. James's Park, now called the Mall, received its name from having been appropriated to the purpose of playing at mall, where Charles himself and his courtiers frequently exercised themselves in the practice of this

[1] An anonymous author, Harl. MS. 6391.

pastime. The denomination mall given to the game, is evidently derived from the mallet or wooden hammer used by the players to strike the ball.

XVII.—RING-BALL.

Commenius[1] mentions a game which he attributes indeed to the children, and tells us, it consisted in striking a ball with a bandy through a ring fastened into the ground. A similar kind of pastime, I am informed, exists to this day in the north of England; it is played in a ground or alley appropriated to the purpose, and a ball is to be driven from one end of it to the other with a mallet, the handle of which is about three feet three or four inches in length; and so far it resembles pall-mall; but there is the addition of a ring, which is not mentioned by Cotgrave; I have however been told, that it was sometimes used in the game of mall. This ring is placed at an equal distance from the sides of the alley, but much nearer to the bottom than the top of the ground, and through this ring it is necessary for the ball to be passed in its progress. The ring is made to turn with great facility upon a swivel, and the two flat sides are distinguished from each other: if the ball passes through the one it is said to be lawful, and the player goes on; but if through the other, it is declared to be unlawful, and he is obliged to beat the ball back, and drive it through again until such time as he causes it to pass on the lawful side; this done, he proceeds to the bottom of the ground, where there is an arch of iron through which it is also necessary for the ball to be passed, and then the game is completed. The contest is decided by the blows given to the ball in the performance, and he who executes his task with the smallest number is the victor.

XVIII.—CLUB-BALL.

Club-ball is a pastime clearly distinguished from cambuc or goff, in the edict above mentioned established by Edward III. The difference seems to have consisted in the one being played with a curved bat and the other with a straight one. The following engravings represent two specimens of club-ball; the first, from a MS. in the Bodleian Library, dated 1344,[2] exhibits a female figure in the action of throwing the ball to a man who elevates his bat to strike it.

[1] Orbis Sensualium Pictus, cap. cxxxvi. [2] No. 264.

24. Club-Ball.—XIV. Century.

Behind the woman at a little distance appear in the original delineation several other figures of both sexes, waiting attentively to catch or stop the ball when returned by the batsman: these figures have been damaged, and are very indistinct in many parts, for which reason I did not think it proper to insert them. The next specimen of ball, taken from a drawing more ancient than the former, a genealogical roll of the kings of England to the time of Henry III. in the Royal Library,[1] presents two players only, and he who is possessed of the bat holds the ball also, which he either threw into the air and struck with his bat as it descended, or cast forcibly upon the ground, and beat it away when it rebounded; the attention of his antagonist to catch the ball need not be remarked. It does not appear in either of these instances how the game was determined.

25. Club-Ball.—XIII. Century.

[1] 14. B. v.

XIX.—CRICKET.

From the club-ball originated, I doubt not, that pleasant and manly exercise, distinguished in modern times by the name of cricket; I say in modern times, because I cannot trace the appellation beyond the commencement of the last century, where it occurs in one of the songs published by D'Urfey.[1] The first four lines, "Of a noble race was Shenkin," run thus:

> Her was the prettiest fellow
> At foot-ball or at cricket,
> At hunting chase, or nimble race,
> How featly her could prick it.

Cricket of late years is become exceedingly fashionable, being much countenanced by the nobility and gentlemen of fortune, who frequently join in the diversion. This game, which is played with the bat and the ball, consists of single and double wicket. The wicket was formerly two straight thin battons called stumps, twenty-two inches high, which were fixed into the ground perpendicularly six inches apart, and over the top of both was laid a small round piece of wood called the bail, but so situated as to fall off readily if the stumps were touched by the ball. Of late years the wicket consists of three stumps and two bails; the middle stump is added to prevent the ball from passing through the wicket without beating it down. The external stumps are now seven inches apart, and all of them three feet two inches high. Single wicket requires five players on each side, and double wicket eleven; but the number in both instances may be varied at the pleasure of the two parties. At single wicket the striker with his bat is the protector of the wicket, the opponent party stand in the field to catch or stop the ball, and the bowler, who is one of them, takes his place by the side of a small batton or stump set up for that purpose two-and-twenty yards from the wicket, and thence delivers the ball with the intention of beating it down. It is now usual to set up two stumps with a bail across, which the batsman, when he runs, must beat off before he returns home. If the bowler proves successful the batsman retires from the play, and another of his party succeeds; if, on the contrary, the ball is struck by the bat and driven into the field beyond the reach of those who stand out to stop it, the striker runs to the stump at the bowler's

[1] Pills to purge Melancholy, fourth edition, 1719, vol. ii. p. 172.

station, which he touches with his bat and then returns to his wicket. If this be performed before the ball is thrown back, it is called a run, and one notch or score is made upon the tally towards his game; if, on the contrary, the ball be thrown up and the wicket beaten down with it by the opponent party before the striker is at home, or can ground his bat within three feet ten inches of the wicket, at which distance a mark made in the ground is called the popping-crease, he is declared to be out of the play, and the run is not reckoned: he is also out if he strikes the ball into the air, and it be caught by any of his antagonists before it reaches the ground, and retained long enough to be thrown up again. When double wicket is played, two batsmen go in at the same time, one at each wicket; there are also two bowlers, who usually bowl four balls in succession alternately. The batsmen are said to be in as long as they remain at their wickets, and their party is called the in-party; on the contrary, those who stand in the field with the bowlers are called the out-party. Both parties have two innings, and the side that obtains the most runs in the double contest claims the victory. These are the general outlines of this noble pastime, but there are many other particular rules and regulations by which it is governed; and those rules are subject to frequent variations, according to the joint determination of the players.

XX.—TRAP-BALL.

Trap-ball, so called from the trap used to elevate the ball when it is to be stricken by the batsman, is anterior to cricket, and probably coeval with most of the early games played with the bat and ball: we trace it as far back as the commencement of the fourteenth century, and a curious specimen of the manner in which it was then played is here presented from a beautiful MS. in the possession of Francis Douce, Esq.[1]

26. Trap-Ball.—XIV. Century.

[1] See p. 102.

Here are only two players, but the game is not restricted to any particular number, though I think it seldom exceeds six or eight on a side. The size of the bat indicates the holder to have possessed no great judgment in striking the ball, but the trap is sufficiently elevated to preclude the necessity of the batsman's stooping when he raises the ball in order to strike it away, which gives it a decided advantage over the machine now used for the same purpose. This is generally made in the form of a shoe, the heel part being hollowed out for the reception of the ball; but boys and the common herd of rustics, who cannot readily procure a trap, content themselves with making a round hole in the ground, and, by way of a lever, use the brisket bone of an ox, or a flat piece of wood of like size and shape, which is placed in a slanting position, one half in the hole with the ball upon it, and the other half out of it: the elevated end being struck smartly with the bludgeon occasions the ball to rise to a considerable height, and all the purposes of a trap are thus answered, especially if the ground be hard and dry. It is usual, in the present game of trap-ball, when properly played, to place two boundaries at a given distance from the trap, between which it is necessary for the ball to pass when it is struck by the batsman, for if it falls withoutside of either, he gives up his bat and is out; he is also out if he strikes the ball into the air and it is caught by one of his adversaries before it grounds; and again, if the ball when returned by the opponent party touches the trap, or rests within one bat's length of it: on the contrary, if none of these things happen, every stroke tells for one towards the striker's game.

Trap-ball, when compared with cricket, is but a childish pastime; but I have seen it played by the rustics in Essex in a manner differing materially from that now practised in the vicinity of the metropolis, and which requires much more dexterity in the performance; for, instead of a broad bat with a flatted face, they use a round cudgel about an inch and a half diameter and three feet in length, and those who have acquired the habit of striking the ball with this instrument rarely miss their blow, but frequently strike it to an astonishing distance. The ball being stopped by one of the opponent party, the striker forms his judgment of the ability of the person who is to throw it back, and calls in consequence for any number of scores towards his game that he thinks proper; it is then returned,

and if it appears to his antagonist to rest at a sufficient distance to justify the striker's call, he obtains his number; but when a contrary opinion is held, a measurement takes place, and if the scores demanded exceed in number the lengths of the cudgel from the trap to the ball, he loses the whole, and is out; while, on the other hand, if the lengths of the bat are more than the scores called for, the matter terminates in the striker's favour, and they are set up to his account.

XXI.—NORTHEN SPELL.

Northen-spell is played with a trap, and the ball is stricken with a bat or bludgeon at the pleasure of the players, but the latter, I believe, is most commonly used. The performance of this pastime does not require the attendance of either of the parties in the field to catch or stop the ball, for the contest between them is simply who shall strike it to the greatest distance in a given number of strokes; the length of each stroke is measured before the ball is returned, by the means of a cord made fast at one end near the trap, the other being stretched into the field by a person stationed there for that purpose, who adjusts it to the ball wherever it may lie; the cord is divided into yards, which are properly numbered upon it in succession, so that the person at the bottom of the ground can easily ascertain the distance of each stroke by the number of the yards which he calls to the players, who place it to their account, and the ball is thrown back. This pastime possesses but little variety, and is by no means so amusing to the bystanders as cricket or trap-ball.

XXII.—TIP-CAT.

Tip-cat, or perhaps more properly the game of cat, is a rustic pastime well known in many parts of the kingdom, and is always played with a cudgel or bludgeon resembling that used for trap-ball. Its denomination is derived from a piece of wood called a cat, of about six inches in length, and an inch and a half or two inches in diameter, diminished from the middle, to both the ends, in the shape of a double cone; by this curious contrivance the places of the trap and of the ball are at once supplied; for when the cat is laid upon the ground, the player with his cudgel strikes it smartly, it matters not at which end, and it will rise with a rotatory motion, high enough for him

to beat it away as it falls, in the same manner as he would a ball.

There are various methods of playing the game of cat, but I shall only notice the two that follow. The first is exceedingly simple, and consists in making a large ring upon the ground, in the middle of which the striker takes his station; his business is to beat the cat over the ring. If he fails in so doing he is out, and another player takes his place; if he is successful he judges with his eye the distance the cat is driven from the centre of the ring, and calls for a number at pleasure to be scored towards his game: if the number demanded be found upon measurement to exceed the same number of lengths of the bludgeon, he is out; on the contrary, if it does not, he obtains his call. The second method is to make four, six, or eight holes in the ground, in a circular direction, and as nearly as possible at equal distances from each other, and at every hole is placed a player with his bludgeon: one of the opposite party who stand in the field, tosses the cat to the batsman who is nearest him, and every time the cat is struck the players are obliged to change their situations, and run once from one hole to another in succession; if the cat be driven to any great distance they continue to run in the same order, and claim a score towards their game every time they quit one hole and run to another; but if the cat be stopped by their opponents and thrown across between any two of the holes before the player who has quitted one of them can reach the other, he is out

BOOK III.

PASTIMES USUALLY EXERCISED IN TOWNS AND CITIES, OR PLACES ADJOINING TO THEM

CHAPTER I

I. Tournament a general Name for several Exercises.—II. The Quintain an ancient Military Exercise.—III. Various Kinds of the Quintain.—IV. Derivation of the Term.—V. The Water Quintain.—VI. Running at the Quintain practised by the Citizens of London; and why.—VII. The Manner in which it was performed.—VIII. Exhibited for the Pastime of Queen Elizabeth.—IX. Tilting at a Water Butt.—X. The Human Quintain.—XI. Exercises probably derived from it.—XII. Running at the Ring.—XIII. Difference between the Tournaments and the Justs.—XIV. Origin of the Tournament.—XV. The Troy Game;—the Bohordicum or Cane Game.—XVI. Derivation of Tournament;—How the Exercise was performed.—XVII. Lists and Barriers.—XVIII. When the Tournament was first practised.—XIX. When first in England.—XX. Its Laws and Ordinances.—XXI. Pages, and Perquisites of the Kings at Arms, &c.—XXII. Preliminaries of the Tournament.—XXIII. Lists for Ordeal Combats.—XXIV. Respect paid to the Ladies.—XXV. Justs less honourable than Tournaments.—XXVI. The Round Table.—XXVII. Nature of the Justs.—XXVIII. Made in Honour of the Fair Sex.—XXIX. Great Splendour of these Pastimes;—The Nobility partial to them.—XXX. Toys for initiating their Children in them.—XXXI. Boat Justs, or Tilting on the Water.—XXXII. Challenges to all comers.

I.—TOURNAMENT.

EVERY kind of military combat made in conformity to certain rules, and practised by the knights and their esquires for diversion or gallantry, was anciently called a tournament: yet these amusements frequently differed materially from each other, and have been distinguished accordingly by various denominations in the modern times. They may however, I think, be all of them included under the four following heads; tilting and combating at the quintain, tilting at the ring, tournaments, and justs.

All these, and especially the two last, were favourite pastimes with the nobility of the middle ages. The progress and decline of tournaments in this country has already been mentioned in a general way;[1] I shall in this place be a little more particular with respect to the nature and distinction of these celebrated diversions.

[1] In the Introduction.

II.—THE QUINTAIN.

Tilting or combating at the quintain is certainly a military exercise of high antiquity, and antecedent, I doubt not, to the justs and tournaments. The quintain, originally, was nothing more than the trunk of a tree or post set up for the practice of the tyros in chivalry.[1] Afterward a staff or spear was fixed in the earth, and a shield being hung upon it, was the mark to strike at:[2] the dexterity of the performer consisted in smiting the shield in such a manner as to break the ligatures and bear it to the ground. In process of time this diversion was improved, and instead of the staff and the shield, the resemblance of a human figure carved in wood was introduced. To render the appearance of this figure more formidable, it was generally made in the likeness of a Turk or a Saracen armed at all points,[3] bearing a shield upon his left arm, and brandishing a club or a sabre with his right. Hence this exercise was called by the Italians, "running at the armed man, or at the Saracen." The quintain thus fashioned was placed upon a pivot, and so contrived as to move round with facility. In running at this figure it was necessary for the horseman to direct his lance with great adroitness, and make his stroke upon the forehead between the eyes or upon the nose; for if he struck wide of those parts, especially upon the shield, the quintain turned about with much velocity, and, in case he was not exceedingly careful, would give him a severe blow upon the back with the wooden sabre held in the right hand, which was considered as highly disgraceful to the performer, while it excited the laughter and ridicule of the spectators.[4] When many were engaged in running at the Saracen, the conqueror was declared from the number of strokes he had made, and the value of them; for instance, if he struck the image upon the top of the nose between the eyes, it was reckoned for three; if below the eyes, upon the nose, for two; if under the nose to the point of the chin, for one; all other strokes were not counted; but whoever struck upon the shield and turned the quintain round, was not permitted to run again upon the same day, but forfeited his courses as a punishment for his unskilfulness.[5]

[1] Vegetius de re militari, lib. i. cap. xi. et xiv.

[2] "Terræ infixis sudibus scuta apponuntur—Quintanæ ludus scilicet equestris exerceretur—in equis lusitani solitum appensis sudes in terram impactas scutis." Robertus Monach. Hist Hierosol. lib. v.

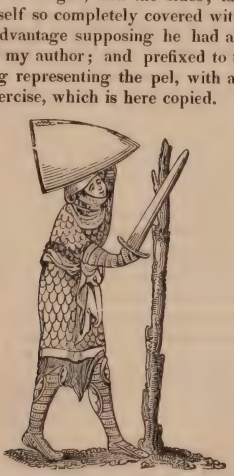
[3] Menestrier, Traité des Tournois, Joustes, &c. p. 264.

[4] Menestrier ut supra; Du Cange Gloss. in voce *quintana*; Pluvinel sur l'exercise de monter à cheval, part iii. p. 177.

[5] Menestrier, p. 112, et Pluvinel ut supra.

III.—VARIOUS QUINTAINS.

The quintain in its original state was not confined to the exercise of young warriors on horseback: it was an object of practice for them on foot, in order to acquire strength and skill in assaulting an enemy with their swords, spears, and battle-axes. I met with a manuscript in the Royal Library,[1] written early in the fourteenth century, entitled "Les Etablissmentz des Chevalerie," wherein the author, who appears to have been a man scientifically skilled in the military tactics of his time, strongly recommends a constant and attentive attack of the pel (from the Latin palus), for so he calls the post-quintain. The pel, he tells us, ought to be six feet in height above the ground, and so firmly fixed therein as not to be moved by the strokes that were laid upon it. The practitioner was then to assail the pel, armed with sword and shield in the same manner as he would an adversary, aiming his blows as if at the head, the face, the arms, the legs, the thighs, and the sides; taking care at all times to keep himself so completely covered with his shield, as not to give any advantage supposing he had a real enemy to cope with: so far my author; and prefixed to the treatise is a neat little painting representing the pel, with a young soldier performing his exercise, which is here copied.



THE PEL QUINTAIN—XIV. CENTURY.

[1] 20. B. xi

Below is the quintain in the form of a Saracen, from Pluvinel

28. The Saracen Quintain.

An English poet who has taken up the subject of chivalry under the title of "Knighthood and Battle,"[1] describes the attack of the pel in the following curious manner:

Of fight, the disciplyne, and exercise
Was this. To have a pale or pile upright[2]
Of mannys hight,[3] thus writeth olde and wise;
Therewith a bacheler, or a yong knyght,
Shal first be taught to stonde and lerne to fight.—
And fanne of doubil wight, tak him his shelde
Of doubil wight, a mace of tre[4] to welde.

This fanne and mace whiche either doubil wight,
Of shelde, and swayed in conflicte, or bataile,
Shal exercise as well swordmen, as knyghtes.
And noe man, as they sayn, is seyn prevaile,
In field, or in castell, thoughe he assayle,
That with the pile, nathe[5] firste grete exercise,
Thus writeth Werrouris olde and wyse.

Have eche his pile or pale upfixed fast,
And as it were uppon his mortal foe;
With mightyness and weapon most be cast
To fight stronge, that he ne skape hym fro.
On hym with shield, and sword avised so,
That thou be cloos,[6] and preste[7] thy foe to smyte,
Lest of thyne own dethe thou be to wite.

[1] Knyghthode and Batayle, MS. Cott. Titus A. xxiii. fol. 6 and 7. This curious poem, written early in the fifteenth century, appears to be a translation of the former treatise, or rather a paraphrase upon it.

[2] Set up.
[3] Of man's height.
[4] A mace or club of wood.
[5] Hath not
[6] Close.
[7] Prompt, swift, ready.

Empeche[1] his head, his face, have at his gorge,[2]
Beare at the breste, or sperne him one the side.
With myghte knyghtly poost,[3] ene as Seynt George
Lepe o thy foe; looke if he dare abide:
Will he not flee? wounde him; make woundis wide,
Hew of his honde, his legge, his theyhs, his armys,
It is the Turk, though he be sleyn noon harm is.

Both the treatises commend the use of arms of double weight upon these occasions, in order to acquire strength, and give the warrior greater facility in wielding the weapons of the ordinary size; to which the poet adds,

And sixty pounds of weight 'tis good to bear.

The lines just now quoted evidently allude to the quintain in the form of a Turk or Saracen, which, I presume, was sometimes used upon this occasion. The pel was also set up as a mark to cast at with spears, as the same poet informs us:

A dart of more wight then is mester,[4]
Take hym in honde and teche him it to stere;
And cast it at the pile as at his foo,
So that it conte and right uppon him go.

And likewise for the practice of archery:

Set hert and eye uppon the pile or pale,
Shoot nyghe or onne; and if so be thou ride
On horse, is eck[5] the bowis bigge up hale,
Smyte in the face, or breste, or back or side,
Compelle to fle, or falle, yf that he bide.

IV.—DERIVATION OF QUINTAIN.

This exercise is said to have received the name of quintain from Quinctus or Quintas the inventor,[6] but who he was, or when he lived, is not ascertained. The game itself, I doubt not, is of remote origin, and especially the exercise of the pel, or post quintain, which is spoken of at large by Vegetius; and from him the substance of what the two authors above quoted have said upon the subject is evidently taken. He tells us that this species of mock combat was in common use among the Romans, who caused the young military men to practise at it twice in the day, at morning and at noon; he also adds that, they used clubs and

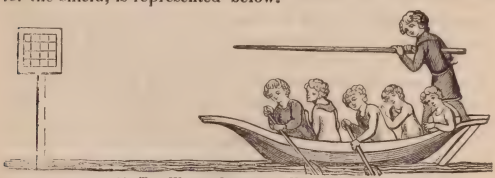
[1] From the French, *empêcher*, to hinder or withstand, here used for attack.
[2] Throat. [3] Power, strength.
[4] Than is required, that is in time of real action. [5] It is the same.
[6] A quincto auctore nomen habebat, vide Joan Meursi, de Ludis Græcorum, in tit Κουταξ Κυνταυος.

javelins, heavier than common, and fought at the pel as if they were opposing an adversary, &c.[1]

In the code of laws established by the emperor Justinian, the quintain is mentioned as a well known sport; and permitted to be continued, upon condition that it should be performed with pointless spears, contrary to the ancient usage, which it seems required them to have heads or points.[2]

V.—THE WATER QUINTAIN.

To the best of my recollection, Fitzstephen is the first of our writers who speaks of an exercise of this kind, which he tells us was usually practised by the young Londoners upon the water during the Easter holidays. A pole or mast, he says, is fixed in the midst of the Thames, with a shield strongly attached to it; and a boat being previously placed at some distance, is driven swiftly towards it by the force of oars and the violence of the tide, having a young man standing in the prow, who holds a lance in his hand with which he is to strike the shield: and if he be dexterous enough to break the lance against it and retain his place, his most sanguine wishes are satisfied: on the contrary, if the lance be not broken, he is sure to be thrown into the water, and the vessel goes away without him, but at the same time two other boats are stationed near to the shield, and furnished with many young persons who are in readiness to rescue the champion from danger. It appears to have been a very popular pastime; for the bridge, the wharfs, and the houses near the river, were crowded with people on this occasion, who come, says the author, to see the sports and make themselves merry.[3] The water quintain, taken from a manuscript of the fourteenth century, in the Royal Library,[4] where a square piece of board is substituted for the shield, is represented below.



29. The Water Quintain—XIV. Century.

Vegetius de re militari, lib. i. cap. xi. et xiv.

Κυντανον χονταξ χωρις της πυρπις, quintanum contacem sine fibula. Cod. de toribus, lib. iii. tit. 43. Stenhanides Descrip. Lond. [4] 2 B. vii.

VI.—RUNNING AT THE QUINTAIN PRACTISED BY THE LONDONERS; AND WHY.

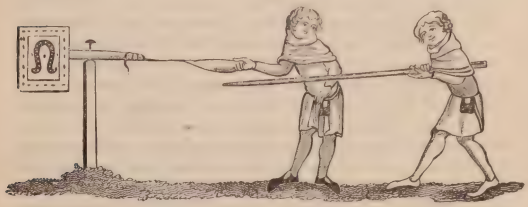
Matthew Paris mentions the quintain by name, but he speaks of it in a cursory manner as a well known pastime, and probably would have said nothing about it, had not the following circumstance given him the occasion. In the thirty-eighth year of the reign of Henry III. A.D. 1254, the young Londoners, who, he tells us, were expert horsemen, assembled together to run at the quintain, and set up a peacock as a reward for the best performer. The king then keeping his court at Westminster, some of his domestics came into the city to see the pastime, where they behaved in a very disorderly manner, and treated the Londoners with much insolence, calling them cowardly knaves and rascally clowns, which the Londoners resented by beating them soundly; the king, however, was incensed at the indignity put upon his servants, and not taking into consideration the provocation on their parts, fined the city one thousand marks.[1] Some have thought, these fellows were sent thither purposely to promote a quarrel, it being known that the king was angry with the citizens of London for refusing to join in the crusade.[2]

We may here observe, that the rules of chivalry, at this time, would not admit of any person, under the rank of an esquire, to enter the lists as a combatant at the justs and tournaments; for which reason the burgesses and yeomen had recourse to the exercise of the quintain, which was not prohibited to any class of the people: but, as the performers were generally young men whose finances would not at all times admit of much expense, the quintain was frequently nothing better than a stake fixed into the ground, with a flat piece of board made fast to the upper part of it, as a substitute for the shield that had been used in times remote; and such as could not procure horses, contented themselves with running at this mark on foot. The following representation of a lad mounted on a wooden horse with four wheels, and drawn by two of his comrades tilting at the immoveable quintain, is taken from a MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, dated 1344.[3]

[1] Matthew Paris. Hist. Angl. sub an 1253.
[2] Strype's Stow, &c. [3] Bod. 264.

50. Fixed Quintain—XIV. Century.

Others, again, made use of a moveable quintain, which was also very simply constructed; consisting only of a cross-bar turning upon a pivot, with a broad part to strike against on one side, and a bag of earth or sand depending from the other: there was a double advantage in these kind of quintains, they were cheap and easily to be procured. Their form, at an early period in the fourteenth century, is represented in the engraving above, and by the following from the same manuscript. Both these quintains are marked, I know not why, with the figure of a horseshoe.



31. Moveable Quintain—XIV. Century.

VII.—MANNER OF EXERCISING WITH THE QUINTAIN.

But to return: Stow, in his Survey of London, having related the above-mentioned disturbance from Matthew Paris, goes on as follows: "This exercise of running at the quintain, was practised in London, as well in the summer as in the winter, but especially at the feast of Christmas. I have seen," continues my author, "a quintain set upon Cornhill by Leadenhall, where

the attendants of the lords of merry disports have run and made great pastime; for he that hit not the board end of the quintain was laughed to scorn, and he that hit it full, if he rode not the faster, had a sound blow upon his neck with a bag full of sand hanged on the other end."[1] But the form of the modern quintain is more fully described by Dr. Plott, in his History of Oxfordshire:[2] "They first set a post perpendicularly into the ground, and then place a slender piece of timber on the top of it on a spindle, with a board nailed to it on one end, and a bag of sand hanging at the other; against this board they anciently rode with spears. Now I saw it at Deddington in this county, only with strong staves, which violently bringing about the bag of sand, if they make not good speed away, it strikes them in the neck or shoulders, and sometimes knocks them off their horses; the great design of this sport being to try the agility both of horse and man, and to break the board. It is now," he adds, "only in request at marriages, and set up in the way for young men to ride at as they carry home the bride; he that breaks the board being counted the best man."

VIII.—THE QUINTAIN, A PASTIME BEFORE QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Among other sports exhibited for the amusement of queen Elizabeth, during her residence at Kenilworth Castle, in Warwickshire, then the seat of the earl of Leicester, who entertained her majesty there for several days, A.D. 1575, there was, says Laneham, "a solemn country bridal; when in the castle was set up a comely quintane for feats at armes, where, in a great company of young men and lasses, the bridegroom had the first course at the quintane, and broke his spear 'tres hardiment' (very boldly, or with much courage). But his mare in his manage did a little stumble, that much adoe had his manhood to sit in his saddle. But after the bridegroom had made his course, ran the rest of the band, awhile in some order, but soon after tag and rag, cut and long tail; where the speciality of the sport was to see how some for his slackness had a good bob with the bag, and some for his haste to topple downright, and come tumbling to the post: some striving so much at the first setting out, that it seemed a question between man and beast, whether the race should be performed on horseback or on foot; and some put forth with spurs, would run his race byas, among the

[1] Survey of London, p.

[2] First published in 1677.

thickest of the throng, that down they came together hand over head. Another while he directed his course to the quintane, his judgment would carry him to a mare among the people; another would run and miss the quintane with his staff, and hit the board with his head."[1] This whimsical description may possibly be somewhat exaggerated, but no doubt the inexpertness of the riders subjected them to many laughable accidents.

IX.—TILTING AT A WATER BUTT.

Below is a representation from a MS. in the Bodleian Library, dated 1343, of three boys tilting jointly, at a tub full of water, which is to be struck in such a manner as not to throw it over them. I presume they are learners only, and that therefore they are depicted without their clothes; they undressed themselves, I apprehend, in order to save their garments from being wetted in case the attempt should prove unsuccessful.

32. Water-Tub Quintain—XIV. Century.

This farcical pastime, according to Menestrier, was practised occasionally in Italy, where, he says, a large bucket filled with water is set up, against which they tilt their lances; and if the stroke be not made with great dexterity, the bucket is overset and the lanceman thoroughly drenched with the contents.[2]

X.—THE HUMAN QUINTAIN.

I shall here say a few words concerning the human quintain, which has escaped the notice of most of the writers upon this subject; it is, however, very certain that the military men in the middle ages would sometimes practise with their lances at a man completely armed; whose business it was to act upon the

[1] Laneham in Queen Elizabeth's Progresses, by Mr. Nichols, vol. i. p. 249.
[2] Traité de Tournois, 1669, p. 347.

defensive, and parry their blows with his shield. A representation of this exercise is in the engraving below, taken from a Bodleian manuscript, dated 1344.

33. Living Quintain—XIV. Century.

This representation is justified by the concurrent testimony of an ancient author, cited by Ducange, who introduces one knight saying to another, "I do not by any means esteem you sufficiently valiant (si bons chevalier) for me to take a lance and just with you; therefore I desire you to retire some distance from me, and then run at me with all your force, and I will be your quintain."[1] The satirist Hall, who wrote in the time of Elizabeth, evidently alludes to a custom of this kind, in a satire[2] first printed in 1599, when he was twenty-five years of age. He says:

> Pawne thou no glove for challenge of the deed,
> Nor make thy quintaine other's armed head.

XI.—EXERCISES PROBABLY DERIVED FROM THE QUINTAIN.

The living quintain, according to the representation just given, is seated upon a stool with three legs without any support behind; and the business, I presume, of the tilter, was to overthrow him; while, on his part, he was to turn the stroke of the pole or lance on one side with his shield, and by doing so with adroitness occasion the fall of his adversary.

Something of a similar kind of exercise, though practised in a different way, appears in the following engraving, where a man seated, holds up one of his feet, opposed to the foot of another man, who standing upon one leg endeavours to thrust him backwards.

[1] Le Roman de Giron le courtois. Du Cange, Gloss. in voce *quintana*.
[2] Lib. iv. Sat. 3.

34.

And again where his opponent is seated in a swing and drawn back by a third person, so that the rope being left at liberty in the swing, the man of course descended with great force, and striking the foot of his antagonist with much violence, no doubt very frequently overthrew him.

35.

The two last sports were probably never exhibited by military men, but by rustics and others in imitation of the human quintain. The contest between the two figures below, seems to depend upon the breaking of the stick which both of them hold, or is a struggle to overthrow each other

36

The following engraving from a manuscript book of prayers of the fourteenth century, in the possession of Mr. Douce, represents two men with a pole or headless spear, who grasp it at either end, and are contending which shall dispossess the other of his hold.

37.

This feat the single figure, represented below from the Oxford MS. of 1344, seems to have achieved, and is bearing away the pole in triumph.[1]

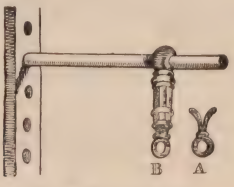
38.

XII.—RUNNING AT THE RING.

Tilting or, as it is most commonly called, running at the ring, was also a fashionable pastime in former days; the ring is evidently derived from the quintain, and indeed the sport itself is frequently called running or tilting at the quintain. With the Italians, says Du Cange, quintano sometimes signifies a ring, hence the Florentines say, "correr alla quintana," which with us is called running at the ring: the learned author produces several quotations to the same purpose.[2] Commenius also, in his vocabulary,[3] says, "At this day tilting at the quintain is

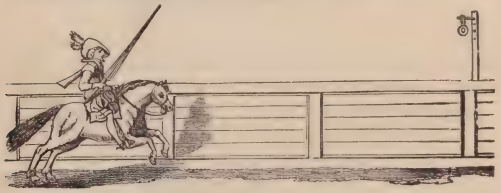
[1] Referred to in p. 118.
[2] Gloss. in voce *quintana*.
[3] Orbis Sensualium Pictus, by Hoole, 1658.

used where a hoop or ring is struck with a lance." Hence it is clear, that the ring was put in the place of the quintain. The excellency of the pastime was to ride at full speed, and thrust the point of the lance through the ring, which was supported in a case or sheath, by the means of two springs, but might be readily drawn out by the force of the stroke, and remain upon the top of the lance.



39. The Ring in Tilting.

Above is the form of the ring, with the sheath, and the manner in which it was attached to the upright supporter, from Pluvinel. The letter A indicates the ring detached from the sheath; B represents the sheath with the ring inserted and attached to the upright post, in which there are several holes to raise or lower the ring to suit the conveniency of the performer. The following engraving, also from Pluvinel, represents the method of performing the exercise.



40. Tilting at the Ring.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century, the pastime of running at the ring was reduced to a science. Pluvinel, who treats this subject at large, says, the length of the course wa measured, and marked out according to the properties of the horses that were to run: for one of the swiftest kind, one

hundred paces from the starting place to the ring, and thirty paces beyond it, to stop him, were deemed necessary; but for such horses as had been trained to the exercise, and were more regular in their movements, eighty paces to the ring, and twenty beyond it, were thought to be sufficient. The ring, says the same author, ought to be placed with much precision, somewhat higher than the left eyebrow of the practitioner, when sitting upon his horse; because it was necessary for him to stoop a little in running towards it.[1]

In tilting at the ring, three courses were allowed to each candidate; and he who thrust the point of his lance through it the oftenest, or, in case no such thing was done, struck it the most frequently, was the victor: but if it so happened, that none of them did either the one or the other, or that they were equally successful, the courses were to be repeated until the superiority of one put an end to the contest.[2]

XIII.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TOURNAMENTS AND JUSTS.

Tournaments and justs, though often confounded with each other, differed materially. The tournament was a conflict with many knights, divided into parties and engaged at the same time. The just was a separate trial of skill, when only one man was opposed to another. The latter was frequently included in the former, but not without many exceptions; for the just, according to the laws of chivalry, might be made exclusive of the tournament.[3]

In the romantic ages, both these diversions were held in the highest esteem, being sanctioned by the countenance and example of the nobility, and prohibited to all below the rank of an esquire; but at the same time the justs were considered as less honourable than the tournaments; for the knight who had paid his fees and been admitted to the latter, had a right to engage in the former without any further demand, but he who had paid the fees for justing only, was by no means exempted from the fees belonging to the tournament, as will be found in the laws relative to the lance, sword, and helmet, a little further on.

XIV. ORIGIN OF THE TOURNAMENT.

It is an opinion generally received, that the tournament originated from a childish pastime practised by the Roman youths

[1] Art de monter a cheval, part iii. p. 156.
[2] Menestrier, Traité de Tournois, p. 112. [3] Du Cange, Gloss. in voce *justa*.

called Ludus Troiæ (the Troy game), said to have been so named because it was derived from the Trojans, and first brought into Italy by Ascanius the son of Æneas. Virgil has given a description of this pastime, according to the manner, I presume, in which it was practised at Rome. If he be accurate, it seems to have been nothing more than a variety of evolutions performed on horseback. The poet tells us, that the youth were each of them armed with two little cornal spears, headed with iron.

Cornea bina ferunt præfixa hastilia ferro.—*Æneid.* lib. v. l. 556.

Having passed in review before their parents, upon a signal given, they divided themselves into three distinct companies; and each company consisted of twelve champions exclusive of its appropriate leader, when, according to Trapp's translation, which if not so poetical is more literal than Dryden's, the tutor of Ascanius, and overseer of the sports,

> ———Epityden, from far
> Loud with a shout, and with his sounding lash
> The signal gave: they equally divide,
> The three commanders open their brigades
> In sep'rate bodies: straight recall'd they wheel
> Their course, and onward bear their hostile darts.
> Then diff'rent traverses on various grounds,
> And diff'rent counter traverses they form;
> Orbs within orbs alternately involve,
> And raise th' effigy of a fight in arms,
> Now show their backs in flight—now furious turn
> Their darts;—now all in peace together ride.

Under the denomination of the first emperors, these games were publicly practised by the young nobility in the circus at Rome.[1]

The same kind of sports, or others bearing close resemblance to them, were established in this kingdom in the twelfth century, and probably at a much earlier period. Fitzstephen, an author then living, informs us, "that every Sunday in Lent, immediately after dinner, it was customary for great crowds of young Londoners mounted on war horses, well trained, to perform the necessary turnings and evolutions, to ride into the fields in distinct bands, armed hastilibus ferro dempto, with shields and headless lances; where they exhibited the representation of battles, and went through a variety of warlike exercises: at the same time many of the young noblemen who had no received the honour of knighthood, came from the king's court, and from

[1] Tacitus Annal. lib. xi. Et Suetonius in vit. Claud.

the houses of the great barons, to make trial of their skill in arms; the hope of victory animating their minds. The youth being divided into opposite companies, encountered one another: in one place they fled, and others pursued, without being able to overtake them; in another place one of the bands overtook and overturned the other." According to Virgil, the Roman youth presented their lances towards their opponents in a menacing position, but without striking with them:

Nunc spicula vertunt infensi.—*Æneid.* lib. v. l. 586.

The young Londoners in all probability went further, and actually tilted one against the other. At any rate, the frequent practice of this exercise must have taught them, insensibly as it were, to become excellent horsemen.

XV.—THE TROY GAME.

I am clearly of opinion, that the justs and tournaments arose by slow degrees from the exercises appointed for the instruction of the military tyros in using their arms, but which of the two had the preeminence in point of antiquity cannot easily be determined; we know that both of them were in existence at the time the Troy game was practised by the citizens of London, and also that they were not permitted to be exercised in this kingdom.

In the middle ages, when the tournaments were in their splendour, the Troy game was still continued, though in a state of improvement, and distinguished by a different denomination it was then called in Latin, behordicum, and in French, bohourt or behourt, and was a kind of lance game, in which the young nobility exercised themselves, to acquire address in handling of their arms, and to prove their strength. Some authors, and with great appearance of truth, derive this word from burdis or bordis, to jest, joke, or make game, and therefore it will properly signify a playful pastime, or combat, such as youth might engage in.[1] The word behordicum will, however, admit of a more enlarged signification; from a quotation which is given by Du Cange, we find it was occasionally used for running at the quintain:

Emmi le pre ot quintaine levée.
Li jouvencel behordent par la prée.

[1] Du Cange, Gloss. in voce *bohordicum*. The word, somewhat differently spelt, occurs in Mandat. Reg. Angl. cited by Du Cange, and in Rymer Fœd. tom. v. p. 223 et alia.

Which will run thus in English: They raised a quintain in the midst of a meadow, and the youth tilted at it with their lances.[1] In fact, I apprehend, it might be applied to any of the military exercises performed by the young men, either for pastime or improvement. Menestrier says, they formerly used hollow canes instead of lances, and for that reason it was also called the cane game. I find no authority to place the cane game at an earlier period than the twelfth century, when probably it originated from the following circumstance related by Hoveden.[2] He tells us, that Richard I. of England, being at Messina, the capital of Sicily, on his way to the Holy Land, went with his cavalcade one Sunday afternoon to see the popular sports exhibited without the walls of the city, and upon their return they met in the street a rustic driving an ass loaded with hollow canes, "arundinas quas cannas vocant." The king and his attendants took each of them a cane, and began, by way of frolic, to tilt with them one against another: it so happened, that the king's opponent was William de Barres, a knight of high rank in the household of the French king, "quidam miles optimus de familia regis Franciæ." In the encounter they broke both their canes, and the monarch's hood was torn by the stroke he received, "fracta est cappa regis," which made him angry; when riding with great force against the knight, he caused his horse to stumble with him, and while he was attempting to cast him to the ground, his own saddle turned round and he himself was overthrown. The king was soon provided with another horse, stronger than the former, which he mounted, and again assaulted de Barres, endeavouring by violence to throw him from his horse, but he could not, because the knight clung fast to the horse's neck. Robert de Bretuil, newly created earl of Leicester, laid hold upon de Barres to assist the king, but Richard forbad him to interfere, desiring that they might be left to themselves. When they had contended a long time, adding threats to their actions, "et dictis et factis," the king was much provoked, and commanded him to leave the place and appear no more before him, declaring at the same time, that he would ever afterwards consider him as an enemy; but through the mediation of the king of France, a reconciliation was effected, and the knight was again restored to the favour of the monarch.

[1] Roman D'Aubrey, MS. apud Du Cange ut supra.
[2] Annal. pars posterior sub an. 1191.

XVI.—TOURNAMENTS.

Our word tournament, or tournoyement, which signifies to turn or wheel about in a circular manner,[1] comes from the French word tournoy, which, according to the generality of authors, is derived from the Latin troja. This does not appear consistent with any reasonable analogy. I am rather led to adopt the opinion of Fauchet,[2] who thinks it came from the practice of the knights running par tour, that is, by turns, at the quintain, and wheeling about successively in a circle to repeat their course; but, says he, in process of time they improved upon this pastime, and to make it more respectable ran one at another, which certainly bore a much greater similitude to a real engagement, especially when they were divided into large parties, and meeting together combatted with clubs or maces, beating each other soundly, without any favour or paying the least respect to rank or dignity. In one of these encounters, Robert earl of Cleremont, son of Saint Louis, and head of the house of Bourbon, was so severely bruised by the blows he received from his antagonist, that he was never well afterwards. This, says Fauchet, was possibly the cause of the ordinance, that the kings and princes should not afterwards enter the lists as combatants at these tournaments; which law indeed, continues he, has been ill observed by the succeeding kings, and in our time by Henry II., who, unfortunately for France, was killed at the justs he made in honour of his daughter's marriage. It was, in fact, very common for some of the combatants to be beat or thrown from their horses, trampled upon and killed upon the spot, or hurt most grievously. Indeed, a tournament at this period was rarely finished without some disastrous accident; and it was an established law, that if any one of the combatants killed or wounded another, he should be indemnified; which made them less careful respecting the consequences, especially when any advantage gave them an opportunity of securing the conquest. Tournaments were consequently interdicted by the ecclesiastical decrees.

The following quotation from an ancient manuscript romance, in the Harleian collection, entitled Ipomydon,[3] plainly indicates the performance of the tournament in an open field; and also, that great numbers of the combatants were engaged at one time, promiscuously encountering with each other: we learn

[1] Cotgrave. [2] Origines des Chevaliers, &c. p. 9. [3] No. 2252. fol. 61.

moreover, that the champion who remained unhorsed at the conclusion of the sports, besides the honour he attained, sometimes received a pecuniary reward.

The kyng his sonne a knyght gan make,
And many another for his sake;
Justes were cryed ladyes to see,
Thedyr came lordes grete plente,
Tournementis atyred in the felde,
A thousand armed with spere and shelde;
Knyghtis began togedre to ryde,
Some were unhorsyd on every side,
Ipomydon that daye was victorius,
And there he gaff many a cours;
For there was none that he mette,
But he hys spere on hym woulde sette:
Then after within a lytell stounde,[1]
Horse and man both went to grounde.
The Heraudes[2] gaff the child the gree,[3]
A thousand pound he had to fee;
Mynstrellys had giftes of golde
And fourty dayes this fest was holde.

In some instances the champions depended upon their military skill and horsemanship, and frequently upon their bodily strength; but at all times it was highly disgraceful to be unhorsed, by whatever exertion it might be effected.

Thomas of Walsingham, one of our own historians, tells us,[4] that when Edward I. returned from Palestine to England, and was on his passage through Savoy, the comes Kabilanensis, earl of Chabloun, invited him to a tournament,[5] in which himself and many other knights were engaged. The king with his followers, although fatigued by the length of their journey, accepted the challenge. On the day appointed both parties met, and, being armed with swords, the engagement commenced; the earl singled out the king, and on his approach, throwing away his sword, cast his arms about the neck of the monarch, and used his utmost endeavour to pull him from his horse. Edward, on the other hand, finding the earl would not quit his hold, put spurs to his horse, and drew him from his saddle hanging upon his neck, and then shaking him violently, threw him to the ground. The earl having recovered himself and being remounted, attacked the king a second time, but finding

[1] A small space of time.
[2] Heralds, whose office it was to superintend the ceremonious parts of the tournaments.
[3] Reward.
[4] Hist. Angl. fol. 3, A.D. 1274.
[5] Ludum militarum (qui vulgo *torneamentum* dicitur). Ibid.

his hand "too heavy," he gave up the contest, and acknowledged him to be the conqueror. The knights of the earl's party were angry when they saw their leader drawn from his horse, and run upon the English with so much violence, that the pastime assumed the tumultuous appearance of a real battle, the English on their side repelled force by force; and had not the resignation of the earl put an end to the conflict, in all probability the consequences would have been very serious.

XVII.—LISTS AND BARRIERS.

It was a considerable time after the establishment of justs and tournaments, before the combatants thought of making either lists or barriers; they contented themselves, says Menestrier,[1] with being stationed at four angles of an open place, whence they run in parties one against another. There were cords stretched before the different companies, previous to the commencement of the tournaments, as we learn from the following passage in an old English romance, among the Harleian manuscripts:[2] "All these thinges donne thei were embatailed eche ageynste the othir, and the corde drawen before eche partie, and whan the tyme was, the cordes were cutt, and the trumpettes blew up for every man to do his devoir, *duty*. And for to assertayne the more of the tourney, there was on eche side a stake, and at eache stake two kyngs of armes, with penne, and inke, and paper, to write the names of all them that were yolden, for they shold no more tournay." As these pastimes were accompanied with much danger, they invented in France the double lists, where the knights might run from one side to the other, without coming in contact, except with their lances; other nations followed the example of the French, and the usage of lists and barriers soon became universal.

XVIII.—WHEN THE TOURNAMENT WAS FIRST PRACTISED.

It is impossible to ascertain the precise period when tournaments first made their appearance; nor is it less difficult to determine by whom they were invented. Peacham, on the authority of Nicetas, tells us, that the emperor Emanuel Comminus, at the siege of Constantinople, invented tilts and tournaments;[3] but this is certainly a mistake The French and the Germans both claim the honour. The historian, Nithard, men-

[1] Tracte de Tournois. [2] No. 326. [3] Complete Gentleman, p. 178.

tions a military game, frequently exhibited in Germany, before the emperor Louis, and his brother Charles the bald, about the year 842, which bears great resemblance to the tournament; for he speaks of many knights of different nations, divided into parties equal in number, and running at each other with great velocity, as though they were in battle: Veluti invicem adversari sibi vellent, alter in alterum veloci cursu ruebat.[1] Most of the German writers, however, make the emperor Henry I., surnamed L'oiseleur, who died in 936, the institutor of these pastimes; but others attribute their origin to another Henry, at least a century posterior. The French, on their side, quote an ancient history,[2] which asserts, that Geofry, lord of Previlli in Anjou, who was slain at Gaunt in 1066, was the inventor of the tournament.

XIX.—THE TOURNAMENT IN ENGLAND.

It seems to be certain, that tournaments were held in France and Normandy before the conquest, and, according to our own writers, they were not permitted to be practised in this country for upwards of sixty years posterior to that event. The manner of performing the tournament, as then used, says Lambarde, "not being at the tilt, as I think, but at random and in the open field, was accounted so dangerous to the persons having to do therein, that sundry popes forbad it by decree; and the kings of this realm before king Stephen would not suffer it to be frequented within their land, so that such as for exercise of this feat of arms were desirous to prove themselves, were driven to pass over the seas, and to perform it in some different place in a foreign country."[3] This author's statement of the fact is perfectly correct. In the troublesome reign of king Stephen, the rigour of the laws was much relaxed, and tournaments, among other splendid species of dissipation, were permitted to be exercised; they were, however, again suppressed by Henry II.; and therefore it was, I presume, that the young king Henry, son of Henry II., went every third year, as Matthew Paris assures us he did, over the seas, and expended vast sums of money "in conflictibus Gallicis," or French combats, meaning tournaments.[4] But Richard I. having, as it is said, observed that the French practising frequently in the tournaments, were more expert in

[1] See more upon this subject in the Encyclopédie François, art. *Tournoi*.
[2] Chronique de Tours.
[3] Perambulation of Kent, p. 492.
[4] Hist. Angl. A.D. 1179.

the use of their arms than the English, permitted his own knights to establish the like martial sports in his dominions; but at the same time he imposed a tax, according to their quality, upon such as engaged in them. An earl was subjected to the fine of twenty marks for his privilege to enter the field as a combatant; a baron, ten; a knight having a landed estate, four; and a knight without such possession, two; but all foreigners were particularly excluded. He appointed five places for the holding of tournaments in England; namely, between Sarum and Wilton; between Warwick and Kenelworth; between Stamford and Wallingford; between Brakely and Mixeberg; and between Blie and Tykehill. The act also specifies that the peace should not be broken thereby, nor justice hindered, nor damage done to the royal forests.[1] How long these imposts continued to be collected does not appear; but tournaments were occasionally exhibited with the utmost display of magnificence in the succeeding reigns, being not only sanctioned by royal authority, but frequently instituted at the royal command, until the conclusion of the sixteenth century. From that period they declined rapidly, and fifty years afterwards were entirely out of practice.

XX.—LAWS AND ORDINANCES OF JUSTS AND TOURNAMENTS.

All military men, says Fauchet,[2] who bore the title of knights or esquires, were not indiscriminately received at these tournaments: there were certain laws to which those who presented themselves became subject, and which they swore to obey before they were permitted to enter the lists.

In one of the Harleian manuscripts,[3] I met with the following ordinance for the conducting of the justs and tournaments according to the ancient establishment. It is preceded by a proclamation that was to be previously made, which is couched in these terms. Be it known,[4] lords, knights, and esquires, ladies, and gentlewomen; you are hereby acquainted, that a superb achievement at arms, and a grand and noble tournament will be held in the parade[5] of Clarencieux, king at arms, on the part of the most noble baron, lord of T. C. B. and on the part of the most noble baron, the lord of C. B. D. in the parade of Norrais,

[1] Harl. MS. 69. [2] Origines des Chevaliers, &c. [3] No. 69.
[4] Or ovez, for Ouir, more literally Hear now; and the words are repeated.
[5] Marche, part of the lists I presume, or portion of ground appropriated to the tournament.

king at arms. The regulations that follow are these: The two barons on whose parts the tournament is undertaken, shall be at their lodges (pavilions) two days before the commencement of the sports, when each of them shall cause his arms to be attached[1] to his pavilion, and set up his banner in the front of his parade; and all those who wish to be admitted as combatants on either side, must in like manner set up their arms and banners before the parades allotted to them. Upon the evening of the same day they shall show themselves in their stations, and expose their helmets to view at the windows of their pavilions; and then "they may depart to make merry, dance, and live well." On the morrow the champions shall be at their parades by the hour of ten in the morning, to await the commands of the lord of the parade, and the governor, who are the speakers of the tournament; at this meeting the prizes of honour shall be determined.

In the document before us, it is said, that he who shall best resist the strokes of his adversary, and return them with most adroitness on the party of Clarencieux, shall receive a very rich sword, and he who shall perform in like manner the best on the part of Norroys, shall be rewarded with an helmet equally valuable.

On the morning of the day appointed for the tournament, the arms, banners, and helmets of all the combatants shall be exposed at their stations, and the speakers present at the place of combat by ten of the clock, where they shall examine the arms and approve or reject them at their pleasure; the examination being finished, and the arms returned to the owners, the baron who is the challenger, shall then cause his banner to be placed at the beginning of the parade, and the blazon of his arms to be nailed to the roof of the pavilion:[2] his example is to be followed by the baron on the opposite side, and all the knights of either party who are not in their stations before the nailing up of the arms, shall forfeit their privileges, and not be permitted to tourney.

The kings at arms and the heralds are then commanded by the speakers to go from pavilion to pavilion, crying aloud, "To achievement, knights and esquires, to achievement;"[3] being

[1] Feront clouer leurs armes, literally nail them; the clouage or nail money, as we shall see afterwards, was the perquisite of the heralds.

[2] "Mettra sa banier, au commencement dedits bastons et clouera la blason de ses armes, a lautre vout." The passage is by no means clear; I have therefore given the words of the original.

[3] A l'achevier, chevaliers, &c.

the notice, I presume, for them to arm themselves; and soon afterwards the company of heralds shall repeat the former ceremony, having the same authority, saying, "Come forth, knights and esquires, come forth:"[1] and when the two barons have taken their places in the lists, each of them facing his own parade, the champions on both parties shall arrange themselves, every one by the side of his banner; and then two cords shall be stretched between them, and remain in that position until it shall please the speakers to command the commencement of the sports. The combatants shall each of them be armed with a pointless sword having the edges rebated, and with a baston, or truncheon, hanging from their saddles, and they may use either the one or the other so long as the speakers shall give them permission, by repeating the sentence, "Laisseir les aler," Let them go on. After they have sufficiently performed their exercises, the speakers are to call to the heralds, and order them to "ployer vos baniers," fold up the banners, which is the signal for the conclusion of the tournament. The banners being rolled up, the knights and the esquires are permitted to return to their dwellings.

XXI.—PAGES AND PERQUISITES OF THE KINGS AT ARMS, &c.

Every knight or esquire performing in the tournament, was permitted to have one page, armed, within the lists, but without a truncheon or any other defensive weapon, to wait upon him and give him his sword, or truncheon, as occasion might require; and also in case of any accident happening to his armour, to amend the same. In after times, three servitors were allowed for this purpose.

The laws of the tournament permitted any one of the combatants to unhelm himself at pleasure, if he was incommoded by the heat; none being suffered to assault him in any way, until he had replaced his helmet at the command of the speakers.

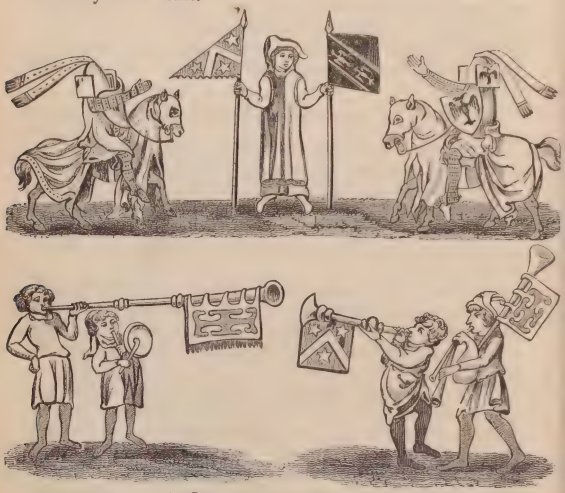
The kings at arms, and the heralds who proclaimed the tournament, had the privilege of wearing the blazon of arms of those by whom the sport was instituted; besides which they were entitled to six ells of scarlet cloth as their fee, and had all their expenses defrayed during the continuation of the tournament: by the law of arms they had a right to the helmet of

[1] Hors chevaliers, &c.

every knight when he made his first essay at the tournament, which became their perquisite as soon as the sports were concluded; they also claimed every one of them six crowns as nail money, for affixing the blazon of arms to the pavilions. The kings at arms held the banners of the two chief barons on the day of the tournament, and the other heralds the banners of their confederates according to their rank.

XXII.—PRELIMINARIES OF THE TOURNAMENT

An illumination to a manuscript romance in the Royal Library,[1] entitled St. Graal, written in the thirteenth century, represents the manner in which the two chief barons anciently entered the lists at the commencement of a tournament. The king at arms standing in the midst of the ground holds both the banners, and the instruments of the minstrels are ornamented with the blazonry of the arms.[2]



41. PREPARATION FOR A TOURNAMENT

[1] No. 14. E. iii.

[2] [The minstrels of the barons are behind them in Mr. Strutt's quarto plate, as in the MS. illumination; on the present page, the minstrels are placed below the combatants, in order to accommodate the figures to the space prescribed by the octavo size.]

The action of the two combatants, who have not yet received their weapons, seems to be that of appealing to heaven in proof of their having no charm to protect them, and no inclination to make use of any unlawful means to secure the conquest; which I believe was a ceremony usually practised upon such occasions.

In the reign of Henry V. a statute was enacted by the parliament, containing the following regulations relative to the tournaments, which regulations were said to have been established at the request of all the nobility of England.[1] The act prohibits any combatant from entering the lists with more than three esquires to bear his arms, and wait upon him for that day. In another clause it is said, If any of the great lords, or others Tient Mangerie, keep a public table, for such, I presume, is implied by the term, they shall not be allowed any additional esquires, excepting those who trencheront, carve for them. It further specifies, that no knight or esquire, who was appointed to attend in the lists as a servitor, should wear a sword or a dagger,[2] or carry a truncheon, or any other weapon excepting a large sword used in the tournament: and that all the combatants who bore lances, should be armed with breastplates, thigh-pieces, shoulder-pieces, and bacinets, without any other kind of armour. No earl, baron, or knight, might presume to infringe upon the regulations of this statute, under the forfeiture of his horse and his arms, and the pain of imprisonment for a certain space of time, at the pleasure of the governors of the tournament. Another clause, which probably refers to such as were not combatants for the day, runs thus: No one except the great lords, that is to say, earls or barons, shall be armed otherwise than above expressed; nor bear a sword, pointed knife, mace, or other weapon, except the sword for the tournament. In case of transgression, he forfeited his horse, and was obnoxious to imprisonment for one year. If an esquire transgressed the law in any point, he not only lost his horse and his arms, but was sent to prison for three years. But if the knights or esquires in the above cases were possessed of lands, and appeared in arms for the service of their lords, it seems they might recover their horses. The "Roys des harnoys," kings at arms, the heralds, and the minstrels, were commanded not to wear any kind of sharp weapons, but to have the swords without points which belonged to them. Those who came as spectators on horse-

[1] Harl. MS. 69.

[2] Coutel, literally a knife.

back, were strictly forbidden to be armed with any kind of armour, or to bear any offensive weapons, under the penalty that was appointed to the esquires; and no boy, or man on foot coming for the same purpose, might appear with a sword dagger, cudgel, or lance; they were to be punished with one year's imprisonment in case of disobedience to the statute.

XXIII.—LISTS FOR ORDEAL COMBATS.

The lists for the tilts and tournaments resembled those, I doubt not, appointed for the ordeal combats, which, according to the rules established by Thomas, duke of Gloucester, uncle to Richard II., were as follows: "The king shall find the field to fight in, and the lists shall be made and devised by the constable; and it is to be observed, that the list must be sixty paces long and forty paces broad, set up in good order, and the ground within hard, stable, and level, without any great stones or other impediments; also that the lists must be made with one door to the east, and another to the west, and strongly barred about with good bars seven feet high or more, so that a horse may not be able to leap over them."[1]

XXIV.—RESPECT PAID TO LADIES IN THE TOURNAMENT.

After the conclusion of the tournament, the combatants, as we have seen above, returned to their dwellings; but in the evening they met again in some place appropriated for the purpose, where they were joined by the ladies, and others of the nobility who had been spectators of the sports; and the time, we are told, was passed in feasting, dancing, singing, and making merry. But, "after the noble supper and dancing," according to the ancient ordinance above quoted, the speakers of the tournament called together the heralds appointed on both parties, and demanded from them alternately, the names of those who had best performed upon the opposite sides; the double list of names was then presented to the ladies who had been present at the pastime, and the decision was referred to them respecting the awardment of the prizes;[2] who selected one name for each party, and, as a peculiar mark of their esteem, the favourite champions received the rewards of their merits from the hands of two young virgins of quality. The statutes and ordinances for justs and tournaments made by John Tiptoft, earl of Wor-

[1] Cotton MS. Nero D. vi. and Harl. MS. 69, ut supra.
[2] "Avec une grele de coups." Encyclop. Fran. in voce *tournoi*.

cester, at the command of Edward IV., in the sixth year of his reign, conclude thus: "Reserving always to the queenes highness and the ladyes there present, the attribution and gift of the prize after the manner and forme accustomed."[1]

Neither was this the only deference that was paid to the fair sex by the laws of the tournament, for we are told, that if a knight conducted himself with any impropriety, or transgressed the ordinances of the sport, he was excluded from the lists with a sound beating, which was liberally bestowed upon him by the other knights with their truncheons, to punish his temerity, and to teach him to respect the honour of the ladies and the rights of chivalry; the unfortunate culprit had no other resource in such case for escaping without mischief, but by supplicating the mercy of the fair sex, and humbly intreating them to interpose their authority on his behalf, because the suspension of his punishment depended entirely upon their intercession.

XXV.—JUSTS INFERIOR TO TOURNAMENTS.

The just or lance-game, in Latin justa, and in French jouste, which some derive from jocare, because it was a sort of sportive combat, undertaken for pastime only, differed materially, as before observed, from the tournament, the former being often included in the latter, and usually took place when the grand tournamental conflict was finished. But at the same time it was perfectly consistent with the rules of chivalry, for the justs to be held separately; it was, however, considered as a pastime inferior to the tournament, for which reason a knight, who had paid his fees for permission to just, was not thereby exempted from the fees of the tournament; but, on the contrary, if he had discharged his duties at the tournament, he was privileged to just without being liable to any further demand. This distinction seems to have arisen from the weapons used, the sword being appropriated to the tournament, and the lance to the just, and so it is stated in an old document cited by Du Cange:[2] "When," says this author, "a nobleman makes his first appearance in the tournament, his helmet is claimed by the heralds, notwithstanding his having justed before, because the lance cannot give the freedom of the sword, which the sword can do of the lance; for it is to be observed, that he who has paid his helmet at the tournament is freed from the payment of a second helmet at the

[1] Harl. MS. 69.

[2] Glossary, in voce *justa*.

just; but the helmet paid at justing, does not exclude the claim of the heralds when a knight first enters the lists at the tournament.

XXVI.—THE ROUND TABLE.

The just, as a military pastime, is mentioned by William of Malmsbury, and said to have been practised in the reign of king Stephen.[1] During the government of Henry III. the just assumed a different appellation, and was also called the Round Table game.[2] This name was derived from a fraternity of knights who frequently justed with each other, and accustomed themselves to eat together in one apartment, and, in order to set aside all distinction of rank or quality, seated themselves at a circular table, where every place was equally honourable. Athenæus, cited by Du Cange,[3] says, the knights sat round the table, "eorum scuta ferentes a tergo," bearing their shields at their backs: I suppose for safety sake. Our historians attribute the institution of the round table to Arthur, the son of Uter Pendragon, a celebrated British hero, whose achievements are so disguised with legendary wonders, that it has been doubted if such a person ever existed in reality.

In the eighth year of the reign of Edward I., Roger de Mortimer,[4] a nobleman of great opulence, established a round table at Kenelworth, for the encouragement of military pastimes; where one hundred knights, with as many ladies, were entertained at his expense. The fame of this institution occasioned, we are told, a great influx of foreigners, who came either to initiate themselves, or make some public proof of their prowess. About seventy years afterwards Edward III. erected a splendid table of the same kind at Windsor, but upon a more extensive scale; It contained the area of a circle two hundred feet in diameter: and the weekly expense for the maintenance of this table, when it was first established, amounted to one hundred pounds; which, afterwards, was reduced to twenty pounds, on account of the large sums of money required for the prosecution of the war with France. This receptacle for military men gave continual occasion for the exercise of arms, and afforded to the young nobility an

[1] "Pugnæ facere quod justam vocant." Hist. Novellæ, fol. 106, sub an. 1142.

[2] Matthew Paris properly distinguishes it from the tournament. "Non hastiludio, quod torneamentum dicitur, sed—ludo militari, qui mensa rotunda dicitur." Hist. Angl sub an. 1252.

[3] Glossary, in voce *mensa rotunda*.

[4] Rogerus de Mortuo Mari. Tho. Walsingham Hist. Angl sub an. 1280, fol. 8

opportunity of learning, by the way of pastime, all the requisites of a soldier. The example of king Edward was followed by Philip of Valois king of France, who also instituted a round table at his court, and by that means drew thither many German and Italian knights who were coming to England.[1] The contest between the two monarchs seems to have had the effect of destroying the establishment of the round table in both kingdoms, for after this period we hear no more concerning it. In England the round table was succeeded by the order of the garter, the ceremonial parts of which order are retained to this day, but the spirit of the institution ill accords with the present manners.

XXVII.—NATURE OF THE JUSTS.

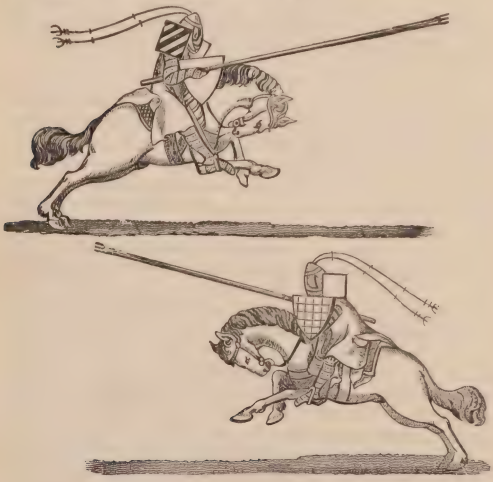
The cessation of the round table occasioned little or no alteration respecting the justs which had been practised by the knights belonging to it; they continued to be fashionable throughout the annals of chivalry, and latterly superseded the tournaments, which is by no means surprising, when we recollect that the one was a confused engagement of many knights together, and the other a succession of combats between two only at one time, which gave them all an equal opportunity of showing individually their dexterity and attracting the general notice.

In the justs the combatants most commonly used spears without heads of iron; and the excellency of the performance consisted in striking the opponent upon the front of his helmet, so as to beat him backwards from his horse or break the spear. Froissart[2] mentions a trick used by Reynaud de Roy, at a tilting match between him and John de Holland: he fastened his helmet so slightly upon his head that it gave way, and was beaten off by every stroke that was made upon the vizor with the lance of John of Holland, and of course the shock he received was not so great as it would have been, had he made the helmet fast to the cuirass; this artifice was objected to by the English on the part of Holland; but John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who was present, permitted Roye to use his pleasure; though he at the same time declared, that for his part, he should prefer a contrary practice, and have his helmet fastened as strongly as possible. And again the same historian, speaking of a justing between

[1] Tho. Walsingham. Hist. Angl. sub an. 1344, fol. 154.
Vol. iii. chap. lix.

Thomas Harpingham and sir John de Barres, says, "As me thought the usage was thanne, their helmes wer tied but with a lace, to the entente the spere should take no hold;" by which it seems the trick became more common afterwards.[1]

Below is a representation of the just, taken from a manuscript in the Royal Library,[2] of the thirteenth, or early in the fourteenth century, where two knights appear in the action of tilting at each other with the blunted spears.[3]



42. JUSTING.—XIV. CENTURY.

This delineation was made before the introduction of the barrier, which was a boarded railing erected in the midst of the lists, but open at both ends, and between four and five feet in height. In performing the justs, the two combatants rode on

[1] Froissart, vol. iii. chap. cxxxiii. fol. 148, lord Berners' translation.

[2] No. 14, E. iii.

[3] [In the original engraving the knights are opposed to each other on the same line: in the present they are separated, and one placed below, in order to represent them within the octavo page of the size is the quarto.]

separate sides of the barrier, and were thereby prevented from running their horses upon each other.

XXVIII.—JUSTS, PECULIARLY IN HONOUR OF THE LADIES.

We have seen that the privilege of distributing the prizes and remitting the punishment of offenders, was by the laws of the tournament invested with the fair sex, but at the justs their authority was much more extensive. In the days of chivalry the justs were usually made in honour of the ladies, who presided as judges paramount over the sports, and their determinations were in all cases decisive; hence in the spirit of romance, arose the necessity for every "true knight" to have a favourite fair one, who was not only esteemed by him as the paragon of beauty and of virtue, but supplied the place of a tutelar saint, to whom he paid his vows and addressed himself in the day of peril; or it seems to have been an established doctrine, that love made valour perfect, and incited the heroes to undertake great enterprises. "Oh that my lady saw me," said one of them as he was mounting a breach at the head of his troops and driving the enemy before him. The French writer St. Foix, who mentions this,[1] says in another place, "It is astonishing that no author has remarked the origin of this devotion in the manners of the Germans, our ancestors, as drawn by Tacitus, who," he tells us, "attributed somewhat of divinity to the fair sex.[2]" Sometimes it seems the knights were armed and unarmed by the ladies; but this, I presume, was a peculiar mark of their favour, and only used upon particular occasions, as, for instance, when the heroes undertook an achievement on their behalf, or combating in defence of their beauty or their honour.[3]

XXIX.—GREAT SPLENDOUR OF THESE SPORTS ATTRACTIVE TO THE NOBILITY

At the celebration of these pastimes, the lists were superbly decorated, and surrounded by the pavilions belonging to the champions, ornamented with their arms, banners, and banerolls. The scaffolds for the reception of the nobility of both sexes who came as spectators, and those especially appointed for the royal family,

[1] Essais Hist. sur Paris, vol. iii. p. 263. Ibid. vol. i. p. 327.

[2] As the ladies, say some modern authors, were *l'ame*, the soul of the justs, it was proper that they should be therein distinguished by some peculiar homage; and, accordingly at the termination of a just with lances, the last course was made in honour of the sex, and called the lance of the ladies. The same deference was paid to them in single combats with the sword, the axe, and the dagger. Encyclop. Fran. article *joute*.

were hung with tapestry and embroideries of gold and silver. Every person, upon such occasions, appeared to the greatest advantage, decked in sumptuous array, and every part of the field presented to the eye a rich display of magnificence. We may also add the splendid appearance of the knights engaged in the sports; themselves and their horses were most gorgeously arrayed, and their esquires and pages, together with the minstrels and heralds who superintended the ceremonies, were all of them clothed in costly and glittering apparel. Such a show of pomp, where wealth, beauty, and grandeur were concentred, as it were, in one focus, must altogether have formed a wonderful spectacle, and made a strong impression on the mind, which was not a little heightened by the cries of the heralds, the clangour of the trumpets, the clashing of the arms, the rushing together of the combatants, and the shouts of the beholders; and hence the popularity of these exhibitions may be easily accounted for.

The tournament and the just, and especially the latter, afforded to those who were engaged in them, an opportunity of appearing before the ladies to the greatest advantage; they might at once display their taste and opulence by the costliness and elegancy of their apparel, and their prowess as soldiers; therefore, these pastimes became fashionable among the nobility; and it was probably for the same reason that they were prohibited to the commoners.

XXX.—TOYS FOR INITIATING CHILDREN IN THESE SPORTS.

Persons of rank were taught in their childhood to relish such exercises as were of a martial nature, and the very toys that were put into their hands as playthings, were calculated to bias the mind in their favour. On the opposite page the reader will find two views of a knight on horseback, completely equipped for the just; four wheels originally were attached to the pedestal, which has a hole in the front for the insertion of a cord. The knight and his horse are both made with brass; the spear and the wheels are wanting in the original, but the hole in which the spear was inserted, still remains under the right arm, and it is supplied upon the print by something like it placed in the proper situation. This curious figure, which probably was made in the fifteenth century, is in the possession of sir Frederic Eden, with whose permission this copy, about the same size as the original, makes its appearance here.

43. A Justing Toy.

The man represented by the figures in the preceding engraving may be readily separated from the horse, and is so contrived as to be thrown backwards by a smart blow upon the top of the shield or the front of his helmet, and replaced again with much ease: two such toys were requisite; each of them having a string made fast in the front of the pedestal, being then placed at a distance in opposition the one to the other, they were violently drawn together in imitation of two knights tilting; and by the concussion of the spears and shields, if dexterously managed, one or both of the men were cast to the ground. Sometimes, as we may see by the subjoined figure from a curious engraving on wood by Hans Burgmair, which makes one of a series of prints representing the history and achievements of the emperor Maximilian the First, in the possession of Francis Douce, esq. these toys were made without wheels, and pushed by the hand upon a table towards each other; but in both cases the effect was evidently the same.

44. Toys, representing Knights Justing.

XXXI.—BOAT JUSTS, OR TILTING ON THE WATER.

It has been previously observed, that all persons below the rank of an esquire were excluded from the justs and the tournaments; but the celebration of these pastimes attracted the common mind in a very powerful manner, and led to the institution of sports, that bore at least some resemblance to them: tilting at the quintain was generally practised at a very early period,[1] and justing upon the ice by the young Londoners.[2] The early inclination to join in such kind of pastimes is strongly indicated by the two boys represented on the next page: the place of the horse is supplied by a long switch, and that of a lance by another.

[1] See sect. vii. p. 118. [2] See book ii. chap. ii. sec. xviii. p. 87.

The original delineation occurs in a beautiful MS. book of prayers, written in the fourteenth century, in the possession of F. Douce, esq.

45. Boys Tilting in Pastime.

Here we may also add the boat justs, or tilting upon the water. The representation of a pastime of this kind is given below, from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Royal Library.[1]

46. Boat Tilting.

The conqueror at these justs was the champion who could dexterously turn aside the blow of his antagonist with his shield, and at the same time strike him with his lance in such a manner as to overthrow him into the river, himself remaining unmoved from his station; and perhaps not a little depended upon the skill of the rowers.[2] When queen Elizabeth visited Sandwich in 1573, she was entertained with a tilting upon the water, "where certain wallounds that could well swym had prepared two boates, and in the middle of each boate was placed a borde, upon which borde there stood a man, and so they met together, with either of them a staff and a shield of wood; and one of them did overthrowe another, at which the queene had good sport."[3] The same kind of laughable pastime was practised at

[1] No. 1, B vii.
[2] See what has been said respecting the quintain upon the water, sect. v. p. 116.
[3] Nichols's Progresses, vol. i. p. 56.

London, as we learn from Stow; "I have seen," says he, "in the summer season, upon the river of Thames, some rowed in wherries, with staves in their hands flat at the fore end, running one against another, and for the most part one or both of them were overthrown and well ducked."

XXXII.—CHALLENGES TO ALL COMERS.

I shall now conclude this long chapter with the two following extracts from a manuscript in the Harleian Collection.[1] Six gentlemen challenged "all commers at the just roial, to runne in osting harnies along a tilte, and to strike thirteen strokes with swordes, in honour of the marriage of Richard duke of York[2] with the lady Anne, daughter to the duke of Norfolk."

When Henry VII. created his second son Henry prince of Wales, four gentlemen offered their service upon the occasion. First, they made a declaration that they do not undertake this enterprise in any manner of presumption, but only "for the laude and honour of the feaste, the pleasure of the ladyes; and their owne learning, and exercise of deedes of armes, and to ensewe the ancient laudable customs."

They then promised to be ready at Westminster on a given day, the twenty-fourth of November, to keep the justs in a place appointed for that purpose by the king. To be there by "eleven of the clock before noone to answer all gentlemen commers, and to runne with every commer one after another, six courses ensewingly; and to continue that daye as long as it shal like the kynges grace, and to tilt with such speares as he shall ordeyn, of the which speares, the commers shall have the choise: but if the said six courses by every one of the commers shall be performed, and the day not spent in pleasure and sport according to the effect of these articles, it shall then be lawful for the said commers to begin six other courses, and so continue one after another as long as it shall be at the king's pleasure. If it shall happen to any gentleman that his horse fayleth him, or himself be unarmed in such wise as he cannot conveniently accomplish the whole courses, then it shall be lawful for his felowe to finish up the courses."

Again, they promise upon a second day, the twenty-ninth of November, to be in readiness to mount their horses at the same place and hour as before, to tourney with four other gentlemen,

[1] No. 69.

[2] Son to king Edward IV., who lost his life with his brother Edward in the Tower.

with such swordes as the king shall ordain, until eighteen strokes be given by one of them to the otner; and add that it shall be lawful to strike all manner of ways, the foyne only excepted, and the commers shall have their choice of the swords. Here it may be observed, that to foyne, is to thrust, as in fencing, which was exceedingly dangerous when the swords were pointed. The author of a MS. poem, in the Cotton Collection,[1] frequently referred to in the course of this work, entitled Knyghthode and Batayle, says, in fighting with an enemy, "to foyne is better than to smyte," and afterwards two inches, "entre foyned," hurteth more than a broader wound with the edge of a sword.

"Whosoever," continues the Harleian manuscript, "shall certifye and give knowledge of his name and of his comming to one of the three kings of arms, whether it be to the justs or at the tourney, he shall be first answered, the states alwayes reserved which shall have the prehemінence. If any one of the said commers shall think the swordes or spears be too easy for him, the said four gentlemen will be redye to answer him or them after their owne minde, the king's licence obteyned in that behalf."

The gentlemen then entreat the king to sign the articles with his own hand, as sufficient licence for the heralds to publish the same in such places as might be thought requisite. The king accepted their offer, and granted their petition; at the same time he promised to reward the best performer at the justs royal with a ring of gold set with a ruby; and the best performer at the tournament with another golden ring set with a diamond, equal in value to the former.

Upon some particular occasions the strokes with the sword were performed on foot, and so were the combats with the axes; the champions having, generally, a barrier of wood breast-high between them.

[1] Titus, A. xxiii. part i. fol. 7.

CHAPTER II.

I. Ancient Plays.—II. Miracle Plays, Dramas from Scripture, &c. continued several days.—III. The Coventry Play.—IV. Mysteries described.—V. How enlivened.—VI. Moralities described.—The Fool in Plays, whence derived.—VII. Secular Plays.—VIII. Interludes.—IX. Chaucer's Definition of the Tragedies of his Time.—X. Plays performed in Churches.—XI. Cornish Miracle Plays.—XII. Itinerant Players, their evil Characters.—XIII. Court Plays.—XIV. Play in honour of the Princess Mary's Marriage.—XV. The Play of Hock Tuesday.—XVI. Decline of Secular Plays.—XVII. Origin of Puppet Plays.—XVIII. Nature of the Performances.—XIX. Giants and other Puppet Characters.—XX. Puppet Plays superseded by Pantomimes.—XXI. The modern Puppet-show Man.—XXII. Moving Pictures described.

I.—ANCIENT PLAYS.

It is not my design to enter deeply upon the origin and progress of scenic exhibitions in England: this subject has already been so ably discussed, that very little new matter can be found to excite the public attention: I shall, therefore, be as brief as possible, and confine myself chiefly to the lower species of comic pastimes, many of which may justly claim the sanction of high antiquity.

II.—MIRACLE PLAYS, DRAMAS FROM SCRIPTURE, &c. CONTINUED SEVERAL DAYS.

The theatrical exhibitions in London, in the twelfth century, were called Miracles, because they consisted of sacred plays, or representations of the miracles wrought by the holy confessors, and the sufferings by which the perseverance of the martyrs was manifested.[1] Such subjects were certainly very properly chosen, because the church was usually the theatre wherein these pious dramas were performed, and the actors were the ecclesiastics or their scholars. The first play of this kind specified by name, I believe, is called St. Catherine, and according to Matthew Paris,[2] was written by Geofrey, a Norman, afterwards abbot of Saint Albans: he was sent over into England by abbot Richard, to

[1] Fitzstephen's Description of London.

[2] Quendam ludum de sancta Katerina (quam miracula vulgariter appellamus) fecit. Vitæ Abbat. p. 35.

take upon him the direction of the school belonging to that monastery, but coming too late, he went to Dunstable and taught there, where he caused his play to be performed about the year 1110, and borrowed from the sacrist of Saint Albans capæ chorales, some of the ecclesiastical vestments of the abbey, to adorn the actors. In latter times, these dramatical pieces acquired the appellation of mysteries; because, as the learned editor of the Reliques of Ancient Poetry supposes, the most mysterious subjects of the scripture were frequently chosen for their composition.[1]

According to the Wife of Bath's prologue in the Canterbury Tales, the miracle plays in Chaucer's days were exhibited during the season of Lent, and sometimes a sequel of scripture histories was carried on for several days. In the reign of Richard II., A.D. 1391, the parish clerks of London put forth a play at Skinners Wells, near Smithfield, which continued three days; the king, queen, and many of the nobility, being present at the performance.[2] In the succeeding reign, 10 Henry IV., A.D. 1409, another play was acted at the same place, and lasted eight days; this drama began with the creation of the world, and contained the greater part of the history of the Old and New Testament. It does not appear to have been honoured with the royal presence, but was well attended by most of the nobility and gentry of the realm.

III.—THE COVENTRY PLAY.

The last of these performances, no doubt, bore a close analogy to the well known mystery entitled Corpus Christi, or Ludus Coventriæ, the Coventry Play; transcripts of this play, nearly if not altogether coeval with the time of its representation, are yet in existence; one in particular is preserved in the Cotton Library.[3] The prologue to this curious drama is delivered by three persons, who speak alternately, and are called vexillators; it contains the argument of the several pageants, or acts, that constitute the piece, and they amount to no less than forty; and every one of these acts consists of a detached subject from the holy writ, beginning with the creation of the universe and concluding with the last judgment. In the first pageant, or act, the

[1] Essay on the Origin of the English Stage, vol. i.
[2] Stow's Survey of London, p 76.
[3] Vespasian, D. viii.

Deity is represented seated on his throne by himself, delivering a speech of forty lines beginning thus:

" Ego sum de Alpha et Omega principium et finis.

" My name is knowyn God and Kynge,
My worke for to make now wyl I wende,
In myself restyth my reyneynge,
It hath no gynnyg ne non ende."

The angels then enter, singing from the church service, " To Thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein; To Thee the Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts." Lucifer next makes his appearance, and desires to know if the hymn they sang was in honour of God or in honour of him? The good angels readily reply, in honour of God; the evil angels incline to worship Lucifer, and he presumes to seat himself in the throne of the Deity; who commands him to depart from heaven to hell, which dreadful sentence he is compelled to obey, and with his wicked associates descends to the lower regions. I have given a much fuller account of this curious mystery in the third volume of the Manners and Customs of the English People, with long extracts, and from several others nearly equal in antiquity, to which the reader is referred. This play was acted by the Friars Minors, or Mendicant Friars, of Coventry; and commenced on Corpus Christi day, whence it received its title. Dugdale says,[1] for the performance of these plays they had theatres for the several scenes very large and high, placed upon wheels, and drawn to all the eminent parts of the city for the better advantage of the spectators.

IV.—MYSTERIES DESCRIBED.

The mysteries often consisted of single subjects, and made but one performance. In the Bodleian Library at Oxford[2] I met with two mysteries that to the best of my knowledge have not been mentioned: the subject of one is the conversion of Saint Paul, and of the other the casting out of the devils from Mary Magdalene; they are both very old and imperfect, especially the latter, which seems to want several leaves. The first is entitled Saulus; and after a short prologue the stage direction follows, " Here outeyth Saul, goodly besene in the best wyse lyke an adventrous knyth, thus sayynge,

[1] Warwickshire, p. 116. [2] Digby, 113.

" Most dowtyd man, I am lyvynge upon the grounde
Goodly besene with many a ryche harlement:
My pere on lyve I trow ys nott yfound
Thorow the world, fro the oryent to the occydent.'

The interlocutors, besides the poet who speaks the prologue, and Saul, are Caiaphas, Ananias, first and second soldiers, the " Stabularyus," or hostler, the servant, and Belial.

V.—MYSTERIES, HOW ENLIVENED.

Notwithstanding the seriousness of the subjects that constituted these mysteries, it seems clear that they were not exhibited without a portion of pantomimical fun to make them palatable to the vulgar taste; and indeed the length and the dulness of the speeches required some such assistance to enliven them, and keep the spectators in good humour; and this may be the reason why the mysteries are in general much shorter than the modern plays. Beelzebub seems to have been the principal comic actor, assisted by his merry troop of under-devils, who, with variety of noises, strange gestures, and contortions of the body, excited the laughter of the populace.[1]

VI.—THE FOOL IN PLAYS, WHENCE DERIVED—MORALITIES DESCRIBED.

When the mysteries ceased to be played, the subjects for the drama were not taken from historical facts, but consisted of moral reasonings in praise of virtue and condemnation of vice, on which account they were called Moralities; and these performances requiring some degree of invention, laid the foundation for our modern comedies and tragedies. The dialogues were carried on by allegorical characters, such as Good Doctrine, Charity, Faith, Prudence, Discretion, Death, and the like, and their discourses were of a serious cast; but the province of making the spectators merry, descended from the Devil in the mystery, to Vice or Iniquity of the morality, who usually personified some bad quality incident to human nature, as Pride, or Lust, or any other evil propensity. Alluding to the mimicry of this motley character, Jonson, in Epig. 159, has these lines:

" ——— But the old Vice
Acts old Iniquity, and in the fit
Of mimicry gets th' opinion of a wit."

In the Staple of Newes, acted A.D. 1625, it is said, " Iniquity

[1] See the Manners and Customs of the English, where this subject is treated upon more largely.

came in like Hokos-pokos in a jugler's jerkin, with false skirts like the knave of clubs;" and afterward, "Here is never a fiend to carry him, the Vice, away; besides, he has never a wooden dagger: I'd not give a rush for a Vice that has not a wooden dagger to snap at every one he meetes:" in another part, the Vice is described, "in his long coat, shaking his wooden dagger." Hence it appears this character had a dress peculiar to himself. Philip Stubs, in his Anatomie of Abuses, printed A.D. 1595, says, "You must go to the playhouse if you will learne to play the Vice, to sweare, teare, and blaspheme both heaven and hell:" and again, "Who can call him a wise man, who playeth the part of a Foole or a Vice?" I remember to have seen a stage direction for the Vice, to lay about him lustily with a great pole, and tumble the characters one over the other with great noise and riot, "for dysport sake." Even when regular tragedies and comedies were introduced upon the stage, we may trace the decendants of this facetious Iniquity in the clowns and the fools which so frequently disgraced them. The great master of human nature, in compliance with the false taste of the age in which he lived, has admitted this motley character into the most serious parts of one of his best tragedies. The propensity to laugh at the expense of good sense and propriety, is well ridiculed in the "Intermeane" at the end of the first act of the Staple of Newes, by Jonson, and again in the Preludium to the Careless Shepherdess, a pastoral tragi-comedy by Thomas Goffe, in 1656, where several characters are introduced upon the stage as spectators, waiting for the commencement of the performance. One of them says:

> Why, I would have a fool in every act,
> Be't comedy or tragedy: I've laugh'd
> Unto I cr'yd again, to see what faces
> The rogue will make. Oh! it does me good
> To see him hold out 's chin, hang down his hands,
> And twirle his bawble. There is nere a part
> About him but breaks jests. I heard a fellow
> Once on the stage, cry doodle doodle dooe
> Beyond compare; I 'de give th' other shilling
> To see him act the Changling once again.

To this another character replies,

> And so would I; his part has all the wit,
> For none speakes, carps, and quibbles besides him;
> I'd rather see him leap, or laugh, or cry,
> Than hear the gravest speech in all the play;
> I never saw Rheade peeping through the curtain,
> But ravishing joy entered into my heart.

A boy then comes upon the stage, and the first speaker inquires for the Fool; but being told he is not to perform that night, he says—

> Well, since there will be nere a fool i' th' play,
> I 'll have my money again; the comedy
> Will be as tedious to me as a sermon.

VII.—SECULAR PLAYS.

The plays mentioned in the preceding pages, and especially the miracles and mysteries, differed greatly from the secular plays and interludes which were acted by strolling companies, composed of minstrels, jugglers, tumblers, dancers, bourdours or jesters, and other performers properly qualified for the different parts of the entertainment, which admitted of a variety of exhibitions. These pastimes are of higher antiquity than the ecclesiastical plays; and they were much relished not only by the vulgar part of the people, but also by the nobility. The courts of the kings of England, and the castles of the great earls and barons, were crowded with the performers of the secular plays, where they were well received and handsomely rewarded;[1] vast sums of money were lavishly bestowed upon these secular itinerants, which induced the monks and other ecclesiastics to turn actors themselves, in order to obtain a share of the public bounty. But to give the better colouring to their undertaking, they took the subjects of their dialogues from the holy writ, and performed them in the churches. The secular showmen, however, retained their popularity notwithstanding the exertions of their clerical rivals, who diligently endeavoured to bring them into disgrace, by bitterly inveighing against the filthiness and immorality of their exhibitions.[2] On the other hand, the itinerant players sometimes invaded the province of the churchmen, and performed their mysteries, or others similar to them, as we find from a petition presented to Richard II. by the scholars of Saint Paul's school, wherein complaint is made against the secular actors, because they took upon themselves to act plays composed from the scripture history, to the great prejudice of the clergy, who had been at much expense to prepare such performances for public exhibition at the festival

[1] See more upon this subject in the following chapter.

[2] By writing and preaching against them. A monkish author of the twelfth century says of them. "Etiam illi quo obscœnio partibus corporis oculis omnium eam ingerunt turpitudinem, quam erubescat videro vel cynicus, &c." Joh. Sarisburensis de Nugis Curialium, lib. i. cap. viii. p. 34.

of Christmas, 1378. But, generally speaking, the secular plays had nothing to do with religion; and if an early writer of our own country, John of Salisbury, may be fully credited, but little with morality: they consisted of comic tales, dialogues, and stories, to which were added coarse and indecent jests, intermixed with instrumental music, singing, dancing, tumbling, gesticulation, and mimicry, to excite laughter, without the least regard to decency; and for this reason the clergy were prohibited from going to see them. In 1519 Cardinal Wolsey, in his regulations for the monastery of the canons regular of Saint Austin, forbad the brethren to be players, or mimics; but the prohibition meant, that they should not go abroad to exercise those talents in a secular or mercenary capacity.[1]

VIII.—INTERLUDES.

The interludes, which, I presume, formed a material part of the performances exhibited by the secular players, were certainly of a jocular nature, consisting probably of facetious or satirical dialogues, calculated to promote mirth, and therefore they are censured by Matthew Paris[2] as "vain pastimes." Something of this kind was the representation made before king Henry VIII. at Greenwich, in 1528, thus related by Hall: "Two persons plaied a dialogue, the effect whereof was, whether riches were better than love; and, when they could not agree upon a conclusion, each called in thre knightes all armed; thre of them woulde have entered the gate of the arche in the middle of the chambre, and the other thre resisted; and sodenly betweene the six knightes, out of the arche fell downe a bar all gilte, at the which bar the six knightes fought a fair battail, and then they departed, and so went out of the place; then came in an olde man with a silver berd, and he concluded that love and riches bothe be necessarie for princes, that is to say, by love to be obeyed and served, and with riches to rewarde his lovers and frendes; and with this conclusion the dialogue ended." We hereby find, that these dialogues were not only a part of the entertainment, but also ingeniously made the vehicles for the introduction of other sports. Sometimes they were of a satirical nature; and, when occasion required, they took another turn, and became the agents of flattery and adulation: both

[1] Dugdale's Monast. vol. ii. p. 568.

[2] Vitæ Abbatum, p. 6.

these purposes were answered by the following dialogue, taken from the author just now quoted: "On Sonday at night the fifteenth of June, 1523, in the great halle at Wyndsore," the emperor Maximilian and Henry VIII. being present, "was a disguisiyng or play; the effect of it was, that there was a proud horse which would not be tamed nor bridled; but Amitie sent Prudence and Policie which tamed him, and Force and Puissance brideled him. This horse was meant by the Frenche kyng,[1] and Amitie by the kynge of England, and the emperor and the other persons were their counsail and power."

IX.—DEFINITION OF TRAGEDIES IN CHAUCER'S TIME.

Comedies were not known, nor tragedies according to the modern acceptation of the word in Chaucer's time; for what he calls tragedies, are simply tales of persons who have fallen from a state of prosperity, or worldly grandeur, to great adversity; as he himself tells us in the following lines:

> Tragedy is to tel a certayne story,
> As olde bokes maken memory,
> Of them that stode in great prosperite,
> And be fallen out of hye degre
> Into misery and ended wretchedly.[2]

X.—PLAYS PERFORMED IN CHURCHES.

The ecclesiastical plays, as we observed before, were usually performed in churches, or chapels, upon temporary scaffolds erected for that purpose; and sometimes, when a sufficient number of clerical actors were not to be procured, the churchwardens and chief parishioners caused the plays to be acted by the secular players, in order to collect money for the defraying of the church expenses; and in many instances they borrowed the theatrical apparel from other parishes when they had none of their own. The acting of plays in churches was much declaimed against by the religious writers of the sixteenth century; and Bonner, bishop of London, in 1542, the thirty-third year of the reign of Henry VIII., issued a proclamation to the clergy of his diocese, prohibiting all manner of common plays, games, or interludes, to be played, set forth, or declared, within their churches or chapels.

[1] Or rather we should say, the French king was meant by the horse, &c.
[2] Prologue to the Monk's Tale, which consists of seventeen short stories or tragedies, of which, he tells us, he had an hundred in his cell.

XI.—CORNISH MIRACLE PLAYS.

In Cornwall the miracle plays were differently represented: they were not performed in the churches, nor under any kind of cover, but in the open air, as we learn from Carew, whose words upon this subject are as follow: "The guary-miracle, in English, a miracle play, is a kind of interlude compiled in Cornish out of some scripture history, with that grossness which accompanied the Romanes vetus comedia. For representing it, they raise an earthen amphitheatre in some open field, having the diameter of his enclined plain some forty or fifty feet. The country people flock from all sides many miles of, to hear and see it, for they have therein devils and devices to delight as well the eye as the eare. The players conne not their parts without booke, but are prompted by one called the ordinary, who followeth at their backs with the book in his hand, and telleth them what to say."[1] In the Harleian Library is preserved a miracle play of this kind in the Cornish language, written by William Gordon, A. D. 1611, accompanied with an English translation by John Keygwyn, A. D. 1693. It begins with the creation and ends with Noah's flood. Noah himself concludes the play, with an address to the spectators, desiring them to "come to-morrow betimes" to see another play on the redemption of man; and then speaking to the musicians, says, "Musicians, play to us, that we may dance together as is the manner of the sport." Such a ridiculous jumble of religion and buffoonery might well excite the indignation of serious people. This species of amusement continued to be exhibited in Cornwall long after the abolition of the miracles and moralities in the other parts of the kingdom, and when the establishment of regular plays had taken place.[2]

[1] Survey of Cornwall, Lond. 1602, p. 71.

[2] [It is proper to observe, that the Harleian manuscript of the "Guary-Miracle," referred to by Mr. Strutt, entitled "The Creation of the World, with Noah's Flood, written in Cornish by William Jordan, with an English translation by John Keigwin," has been carefully edited by Davies Gilbert Esq. M.P. F.R.S. F.S.A. &c. and printed by Mr. J. B. Nichols in one volume 8vo. 1827. Mr. Davies Gilbert, who, subsequent to that work was elected president of the Royal Society, had previously edited and given to the public a remarkable Cornish poem called "Mount Calvary," also translated by John Keigwin, with a memoir of Keigwin, and some particulars of his family, by Nicholas Harris Nicolas, esq. F.S.A. These two volumes, and another on "Ancient Christmas Carols, with the tunes to which they were formerly sung in the West of England," also by Mr. Gilbert, are highly valuable additions to our metrical and dramatic archæologia. The airs of the carols are especially curious; and the preface to them contains accounts of a versified play exhibiting the prowess of St. George over a Mahometan adversary, and of a rustic farce which usually followed it.]

XII.—CHARACTER OF THE OLD ITINERANT PLAYERS.

The itinerant players often exhibited their performances upon temporary scaffolds as late as the reign of queen Elizabeth. A writer of that time, who is very severe against them, says, "They are called histriones, or rather histrices, which play, upon scaffolds and stages, enterludes and comedies;" he then launches out most furiously, calling them "jugglers, scoffers, jeasters, and players," and ranks them with the lowest and most vicious of mankind.[1]

XIII.—COURT PLAYS.

There was another species of entertainment which differed materially from any of the pastimes mentioned in the preceding pages, I mean the ludi, or plays exhibited at court in the Christmas holidays: we trace them as far back as the reign of Edward III. The preparations made for them at that time are mentioned without the least indication of novelty, which admits of the supposition that they were still more ancient. From the numeration of the dresses appropriated in 1348 to one of these plays, which consisted of various kinds of disguisements, they seem to have merited rather the denomination of mummeries than of theatrical divertisements.[2] The king then kept his Christmas at his castle at Guildford; the dresses are said to be ad faciendum ludos domini regis, and consisted of eighty tunics of buckram of various colours; forty-two visors of different similitudes, namely, fourteen of faces of women, fourteen of faces of men, and fourteen heads of angels made with silver; twenty-eight crests; fourteen mantles embroidered with heads of dragons; fourteen white tunics wrought with the heads and wings of peacocks; fourteen with the heads of swans with wings; fourteen tunics painted with the eyes of peacocks; fourteen tunics of English linen painted; and fourteen other tunics embroidered with stars of gold.[3] How far these plays were enlivened by dialogues, or interlocutory eloquence is not known; but probably they partook more of the feats of pantomime than of colloquial excellency, and were better calculated to amuse the sight than to instruct the mind.

The magnificent pageants and disguisings frequently exhibited

[1] A treatise against dicing, dancing, vain plays, or interludes, &c. by John Northbrooke.

[2] Wardrobe roll of Edward III.

[3] Warton's Hist. Eng. Poet. vol. i. p. 238.

at court in the succeeding times, and especially in the reign of Henry VIII., no doubt originated from the ludi above mentioned. These mummeries, as a modern writer justly observes, were destitute of character and humour, their chief aim being to surprise the spectators "by the ridiculous and exaggerated oddity of the visors, and by the singularity and splendour of the dresses; every thing was out of nature and propriety. Frequently the masque was attended with an exhibition of gorgeous machinery, resembling the wonders of a modern pantomime." [1]

The reader may form some judgment of the appearance the actors made upon these occasions, from the following:

47. MUMMERS.—XIV. CENTURY.

These, and the other figures in the subjoined engraving, are taken from a beautiful manuscript in the Bodleian Library, written and illuminated in the reign of Edward III.[2]

48. MUMMERS.—XIV. CENTURY.

The performance seems to have consisted chiefly in dancing, and the mummers are usually attended by the minstrels playing upon different kinds of musical instruments.

[1] Warton, vol. iii. p. 156. See also Dr. Henry, Hist. Brit. vol. vi. book vi. chap. 7.
[2] No. 264. This MS. was completed in the year 1348.

Many of these stately shows are described at length by Hall and Holinshed; and, as some of my readers may not have those authors near at hand, I will subjoin the account of two of them in Hall's own words. In the fifth year of the reign of Henry VIII, his majesty kept his Christmas at Greenwich; and, "according to olde custome," on twelfth night,[1] "there came," says the historian, "into the greate hall, a mount called the riche mount. This mount was set full of riche flowers of silke, and especially of brome[2] slippes full of poddes, the branches were grene sattin, and the flowers flat gold of damaske which signified Plantagenet: on the top stood a goodly bekon[3] giving light, rounde above the bekon sat the king and five other al in coates and cappes of right crimosin velvet, embroudered with flat gold of damaske, their coates set full of spangelles of gold; and foure woodhouses drew the mount 'till it came before the queen, and then the kyng and his compaigne discended and daunced; then suddainly the mount opened, and out came six ladies all in crimosin satin and plunket, embroudered with golde and perle, with Frenche hoodes on their heddes, and they daunced alone. Then the lordes of the mount tooke the ladies and daunced together, and the ladies re-entered, and the mount closed, and so was conveyed out of the hall."[4] The woodhouses, in the preceding quotation, or wodehouses, as they are sometimes called, were wild or savage men; and in this instance, men dressed up with skins, or rugs resembling skins, so as to appear like savages. These pageants were frequently moveable and drawn upon wheels. In honour of the marriage of Arthur, prince of Wales, with Catherine of Spain, there were three pageants exhibited in Westminster Hall, which succeeded each other, and were all of them drawn upon wheels: the first was a castle with ladies; the second a ship in full sail, that cast anchor near the castle; and the third a mountain with several armed knights upon it, who stormed the castle, and obliged the ladies to surrender. The show ended in a dance, and the pageantry disappeared.[5]

XIV.—PLAY IN HONOUR OF THE PRINCESS MARY.

In the tenth year of the same king's reign, in honour of his sister the princess Mary's marriage with the king of France,[6]

[1] Vita Hen. VIII. fol. 59.
[2] Broom.
[3] Beacon.
[4] Hall's Union. Vita Hen. VIII. fol. 9.
[5] Harl. MS. 69, p. 31
[6] October the eighth.

there was exhibited in the great hall at Greenwich, "a rock ful of al maner of stones very artificially made, and on the top stood five trees: the first was an olive tree, on which hanged a shield of the armes of the church of Rome; the second was a pyne aple tree,[1] with the armes of the emperor; the third was a rosyer,[2] with the armes of England; the fourth a braunche of lylies, bearing the armes of France; and the fifth a pomegranet tree, bearing the armes of Spayn; in token that all these five potentates were joined together in one league against the enemies of Christe's fayth: in and upon the middes of the rock satte a fayre lady, richely appareyled, with a dolphin in her lap. In this rock were ladies and gentlemen appareled, in crimosyn sattyn, covered over with floures of purple satyn, embroudered with wrethes of gold knit together with golden laces, and on every floure a hart of gold moving. The ladies' tyer[3] was after the fashion of Inde, with kerchiefes of pleasaunce[4] hached with fyne gold, and set with letters of Grecke in gold of bullion, and the edges of their kerchiefes were garnished with hanging perle. These gentlemen and ladyes sate on the neyther part of the rock, and out of a cave in the same rock came ten knightes armed at all poyntes, and faughte together a fayre tournay. And when they were severed and departed, the disguysers dissended from the rock and daunced a great space, and sodeynly the rock moved and receaved the disguysers and imediately closed agayn. Then entred a person called report, appareled in crymosyn satin full of tongues, sitting on a flying horse with wynges and feete of gold called Pegasus; this person in Frenche declared the meaning of the rocks, the trees, and the tourney."[5]

XV.—PLAY OF HOCK-TUESDAY.

Among the pastimes exhibited for the entertainment of queen Elizabeth during her stay at Kenelworth Castle, Warwickshire, was a kind of historical play, or old storial show, performed by certain persons who came for that purpose from Coventry. It was also called the old Coventry play of Hock-Tuesday, but must not be confounded with the Ludus de Corpus Christi, or Coventry Mystery, mentioned before, to which it did not bear the least analogy. The subject of the Hock-Tuesday show was the massacre of the Danes, a memorable event in the

[1] Pine apple. [2] A rose tree. [3] Head dress.
[4] Pleasaunce was a fine thin species of gauze, which was striped with gold.
[5] Hall, ut sup fol. 59.

English history, on St. Brice's night, November 13, 1002, which was expressed "in action and in rhimes." It is said to have been annually acted in the town of Coventry, according to ancient custom; but that it was suppressed soon after the reformation, at the instance of some of their preachers, whose good intention the towns-people did not deny, but complained of their severity; urging in behalf of the show, that it was "without ill example of manners, papistry, or any superstition."[1] The rhimes originally belonging to the play, I presume, were omitted upon the abovementioned occasion;[2] for it appears to have been performed without any recitation in mere dumb show, and consisted of hot skirmishes and furious encounters between the English and the Danish forces: first by the launce knights on horseback, armed with spears and shields, who being many of them dismounted fought with swords and targets. Then followed two "host of foot men," one after the other, first marching in ranks, then, turning about in a warlike manner, they changed their form from ranks into squadrons, then into triangles, then into rings, and then "winding out again they joined in battle; twice the Danes had the better, but at the last conflict they were beaten down, overcome, and many of them led captive for triumph by our English women." Her majesty was much pleased with this performance, "whereat," says my author, "she laughed well," and rewarded the actors with two bucks, and five marks in money; and with this munificence they were highly satisfied.[3]

XVI.—DECLINE OF SECULAR PLAYS.

The secular plays, as we have seen, consisted of a medley of different performances, calculated chiefly to promote mirth without any view to instruction; but soon after the production of regular plays, when proper theatres were established, the motley exhibitions of the strolling actors were only relished by the vulgar; the law set her face against them, the performers were stigmatised with the names of rogues and vagabonds, and all access was denied them at the houses of the opulent. They depended of course upon the precarious support derived from the favours of the lower classes of the people, which was not

[1] Laneham's account of the sports at Kenelworth Castle, in Nichols's Progresses of queen Elizabeth, vol. i. p. 22.

[2] Owing to the discontinuance of the play they might have been lost, and probably the time did not permit them to be written anew. Reliq. Anc. Poet. vol. i. p. 142.

[3] Laneham ut supra, p. 24.

sufficient to enable them to appear with their former credit; their companies were necessarily divided, and their performances became less worthy of notice, every one of them endeavouring to shift for himself in the best manner that he could; or a few of them uniting their abilities as occasion might serve, exhibited at wakes and fairs, and lived upon the contributions of rustics and children. The tragitour now became a mere juggler, and played a few paltry tricks occasionally, assisted by the bourdour, or jester, transformed into a modern jack-pudding. It is highly probable, that necessity suggested to him the idea of supplying the place of his human confederates by automaton figures made of wood, which, by means of wires properly attached to them, were moved about, and performed many of the actions peculiar to mankind; and, with the assistance of speeches made for them behind the scenery, produced that species of drama commonly distinguished by the appellation of a droll, or a puppet-play; wherein a facetious performer, well known by the name of Punchinello, supplied the place of the Vice, or mirth-maker, a favourite character in the moralities. In modern days this celebrated actor, who has something to say to the greater part of his auditory, is called plain Punch. In the moralities, the Devil usually carried away the Iniquity, or Evil, at the conclusion of the drama;[1] and, in compliance with the old custom, Punch, the genuine descendant of the Iniquity, is constantly taken from the stage by the Devil at the end of the puppet-show. Ben Jonson, by way of burlesque, in the comedy entitled "The Devil is an Asse," reverses the ancient usage, and makes the Iniquity run away with the Fiend, saying—

> The Divell was wont to carry away the Evill,
> But now the Evill out-carries the Divell.—*Act* v. *scene* 6.

The first appearance of a company of wooden actors excited, no doubt, the admiration of the populace, and the novelty of such an exhibition was probably productive of much advantage to the inventor. I cannot pretend to determine the time that puppet-plays were first exhibited in England. I rather think this species of entertainment originated upon the continent. Cervantes has made Don Quixote a spectator at a puppet-show, and the knight's behaviour upon this occasion is described with great humor. The puppets were originally called motions: we find them mentioned in Gammer Gurton's Needle, which is supposed to

[1] See sect. vi. p. 153.

have been written in 1517; and there the master of the puppet-show seems to have been considered as no better than an idle vagrant. One of the characters says, he will go "and travel with young Goose, the motion-man, for a puppet-player."

XVII.—ORIGIN OF PUPPET-PLAYS.

Previous to the invention of puppets, or rather to the incorporating of them into companies, there were automatons that performed variety of motions. The famous rood, or crucifix, at Boxley in Kent, described by Lambarde, was a figure of this kind, which moved its eyes, and turned its head whenever the monkish miracle workers required its assistance. The jack of the clock-house, often mentioned by the writers of the sixteenth century, was also an automaton, that either struck the hours upon the bell in their proper rotation, or signified by its gestures that the clock was about to strike. In a humorous pamphlet called Lanthorn and Candle, or the Bellman's Second Walk, published at London, 1605, it is said, "The Jacke of the Clocke-house goes upon screws, and his office is to do nothing but strike;" and in an old play still more early, "He shakes his heade and throws his arms about like the Jacke of the Clocke-house." The name of Jack of the Clock-house was also given to a certain description of thieves. From these figures, I doubt not, originated the more modern heroes of the puppet-show.

XVIII.—NATURE OF PERFORMANCES BY PUPPETS.

The puppet-shows usually made their appearance at great fairs, and especially at those in the vicinity of the metropolis; they still[1] continue to be exhibited in Smithfield at Bartholomew-tide, though with very little traces of their former greatness; indeed, of late years, they have become unpopular, and are frequented only by children. It is, however, certain, that the puppet-shows attracted the notice of the public at the commencement of the last century, and rivalled in some degree the more pompous exhibitions of the larger theatres.[2] Powel, a famous puppet-show man, is mentioned in one of the early papers of the Spectator,[3] and his performances are humorously contrasted with those of the Opera House. At the same time

[1] [In 1801.]
[2] See the Introduction.
[3] No. xiv. vol. i. first published in 1711.

there was another motion-master, who also appears to have been of some celebrity, named Crawley; I have before me two bills of his exhibition, one for Bartholomew Fair, and the other for Southwark Fair. These are preserved in a miscellaneous collection of advertisements and title-pages among the Harleian MSS.[1] The first of these bills runs thus: "At Crawley's Booth, over against the Crown Tavern in Smithfield, during the time of Bartholomew Fair, will be presented a little opera, called the Old Creation of the World, yet newly revived; with the addition of Noah's Flood; also several fountains playing water during the time of the play.—The last scene does present Noah and his family coming out of the Ark, with all the beasts two and two, and all the fowls of the air seen in a prospect sitting upon trees; likewise over the ark is seen the Sun rising in a most glorious manner: moreover, a multitude of Angels will be seen in a double rank, which presents a double prospect, one for the sun, the other for a palace, where will be seen six Angels ringing of bells.—Likewise Machines descend from above, double and treble, with Dives rising out of Hell, and Lazarus seen in Abraham's bosom, besides several figures dancing jiggs, sarabands, and country dances, to the admiration of the spectators; with the merry conceits of squire Punch and sir John Spendall." This curious medley was, we are told, "completed by an Entertainment of singing, and dancing with several naked swords, performed by a Child of eight years of age." In the second bill, we find the addition of "the Ball of little Dogs;" it is also added, that these celebrated performers had danced before the queen (Anne) and most of the quality of England, and amazed every body.

XIX.—GIANTS AND OTHER PUPPET CHARACTERS.

The subjects of the puppet-dramas were formerly taken from some well known and popular stories, with the introduction of knights and giants; hence the following speech in the Humorous Lovers, a comedy, printed in 1617: "They had like to have frighted me with a man dressed up like a gyant in a puppet-show." In my memory, these shows consisted of a wretched display of wooden figures, barbarously formed and decorated, without the least degree of taste or propriety; the wires that communicated the motion to them appeared at the tops

[1] No. 5931.

of their heads, and the manner in which they were made to move, evinced the ignorance and inattention of the managers; the dialogues were mere jumbles of absurdity and nonsense, intermixed with low immoral discourses passing between Punch and the fiddler, for the orchestra rarely admitted of more than one minstrel; and these flashes of merriment were made offensive to decency by the actions of the puppet. In the reign of James II. there was a noted merry-andrew named Philips; "This man," says Granger, "was some time fiddler to a puppet-show; in which capacity he held many a dialogue with Punch, in much the same strain as he did afterwards with the mountebank doctor, his master upon the stage. This zany, being regularly educated, had confessedly the advantage of his brethren."[1]

XX.—PUPPET-PLAYS SUPPRESSED BY PANTOMIMES.

The introduction, or rather the revival of pantomimes, which indeed have long disgraced the superior theatres, proved the utter undoing of the puppet-show men; in fact, all the absurdities of the puppet-show, except the discourses, are retained in the pantomimes, the difference consisting principally in the substitution of living puppets for wooden ones; but it must be confessed, though nothing be added to the rationality of the performances, great pains is taken to supply the defect, by fascinating the eyes and the ears; and certainly the brilliancy of the dresses and scenery, the skilful management of the machinery, and the excellence of the music, in the pantomimes, are great improvements upon the humble attempts of the vagrant motion-master

XXI.—THE MODERN PUPPET-SHOW MAN.

In the present day, the puppet-show man travels about the streets when the weather will permit, and carries his motions, with the theatre itself, upon his back! The exhibition takes place in the open air; and the precarious income of the miserable itinerant depends entirely on the voluntary contributions of the spectators, which, as far as one may judge from the squ appearance he usually makes, is very trifling.

A few years back,[2] a puppet-show was exhibited at the court end of the town, with the Italian title Fantoccini, which greatly

[1] Biogr. Hist. vol. iv. p. 350.

[2] [Before 1801.]

attracted the notice of the public, and was spoken of as an extraordinary performance: it was, however, no more than a puppet-show, with the motions constructed upon better principles, dressed with more elegance, and managed with greater art, than they had formerly been.

XXII.—MOVING PICTURES.

Another species of scenic exhibition with moving figures, bearing some distant analogy to the puppets, appeared at the commencement of the last century. Such a show is thus described in the reign of queen Anne, by the manager of a show exhibited at the great house in the Strand, over against the Globe Tavern, near Hungerford Market; the best places at one shilling, and the others at sixpence each: "To be seen, the greatest Piece of Curiosity that ever arrived in England, being made by a famous engineer from the camp before Lisle, who, with great labour and industry, has collected into a moving picture the following figures: first, it doth represent the confederate camp, and the army lying intrenched before the town; secondly, the convoys and the mules with prince Eugene's baggage; thirdly, the English forces commanded by the duke of Marlborough; likewise, several vessels, laden with provisions for the army, which are so artificially done as to seem to drive the water before them. The city and the citadel are very fine, with all its outworks, ravelins, hornworks, counter-scarps, half-moons, and palisados; the French horse marching out at one gate, and the confederate army marching in at the other; the prince's travelling coach with two generals in it, one saluting the company as it passes by; then a trumpeter sounds a call as he rides, at the noise whereof a sleeping centinel starts, and lifts up his head, but, not being espied, lies down to sleep again; besides abundance more admirable curiosities too tedious to be inserted here." He then modestly adds, "In short the whole piece is so contrived by art, that it seems to be life and nature." These figures, I presume, were flat painted images moving upon a flat surface, like those frequently seen upon the tops of clocks, where a carpenter's shop, or a stone-mason's yard, are by no means unusually represented. A juggler named Flockton, some few years back, had an exhibition of this kind, which he called a grand piece of clock-work. In this machine the combination of many dif-

ferent motions, and tolerably well contrived, were at one time presented to the eye.

Pinkethman's Pantheon mentioned in the Spectator, was, I presume, an exhibition something similar to that above described, and probably the heathen deities were manufactured from pasteboard, and seated in rows one above the other upon clouds of the same material; at least I have seen them so fabricated, and so represented, about 1760, at a show in the country, which was contrived in such a manner, that the whole group descended and ascended with a slow motion to the sound of music.

CHAPTER III.

I. The British Bards.—II. The Northern Scalds.—III. The Anglo-Saxon Gleemen.—IV. The Nature of their Performances.—V. A Royal Player with three Darts.—VI. Bravery of a Minstrel in the Conqueror's Army.—VII. Other Performances by Gleemen.—VIII. The Harp an Instrument of Music much used by the Saxons.—IX. The Norman Minstrels, and their different Denominations, and professions.—X. Troubadours.—XI. Jestours.—XII. Tales and Manners of the Jesters.—XIII. Further Illustration of their Practices.—XIV. Patronage, Privileges, and Excesses of the Minstrels.—XV. A Guild of Minstrels.—XVI. Abuses and Decline of Minstrelsy.—XVII. Minstrels were Satirists and Flatterers.—XVIII. Anecdotes of offending Minstrels, Women Minstrels.—XIX. The Dress of the Minstrels.—XX. The King of the Minstrels, why so called.—XXI. Rewards given to Minstrels.—XXII. Payments to Minstrels.—XXIII. Wealth of certain Minstrels.—XXIV. Minstrels were sometimes Dancing Masters.

I.—THE BRITISH BARDS.

THE Britons were passionately fond of vocal and instrumental music: for this reason, the bards, who exhibited in one person the musician and the poet, were held in the highest estimation among them. "These bards," says an early historian, "celebrated the noble actions of illustrious persons in heroic poems which they sang to the sweet sounds of the lyre;"[1] and to this testimony we may add another of equal authority; "The British bards are excellent and melodious poets, and sing their poems, in which they praise some, and censure others, to the music of an instrument resembling a lyre."[2] Their songs and their music are said, by the same writer, to have been so exceedingly affecting, that "sometimes when two armies are standing in order of battle, with their swords drawn, and their lances extended upon the point of engaging in a most furious conflict, the poets have stepped in between them, and by their soft and fascinating songs calmed the fury of the warriors, and prevented the bloodshed. Thus, even among barbarians," adds the author, "rage gave way to wisdom, and Mars submitted to the Muses."

[1] Ammianus Marcell. lib. xv. cap. 9. [2] Diodorus Siculus, lib. v. cap. 31.

II.—THE NORTHERN SCALDS.

The scalds[1] were the poets and the musicians of the ancient northern nations; they resembled the bards of the Britons, and were held in equal veneration by their countrymen. The scalds were considered as necessary appendages to royalty, and even the inferior chieftains had their poets to record their actions and indulge their vanity.

III.—THE ANGLO-SAXON GLEEMEN.

Upon the establishment of the Saxons in Britain, these poetical musicians were their chief favourites; the courts of the kings, and the residences of the opulent afforded them a constant asylum; their persons were protected, and admission granted to them without the least restraint. In the Anglo-Saxon language they were distinguished by two appellations; the one equivalent to the modern term of gleemen or merry-makers, and the other harpers, derived from the harp, an instrument they usually played upon. Glıþ or Glıȝman; hence Glıȝȝamen, glee-games, are properly explained in Somner's Lexicon, by merry tricks, jests, sports, and gambols, which were expressive of their new acquirements: Ꝺeaꞃpeꞃe, the appellation of harper, was long retained by the English rhymists. The gleemen added mimicry, and other means of promoting mirth to their profession, as well as dancing and tumbling, with sleights of hand, and variety of deceptions to amuse the spectators; it was therefore necessary for them to associate themselves into companies, by which means they were enabled to diversify their performances, and render many of them more surprising through the assistance of their confederates. In Edgar's oration to Dunstan, the mimi, or minstrels, are said to sing and dance; and, in the Saxon canons made in that king's reign, A.D. 960, (Can. 58,) it is ordered that no priest shall be a poet, ꞅceop, or exercise the mimical or histrionical art, in any degree, public or private.[2] Lye renders the words "ne ænıȝe Ꝺıꞅan ȝlıþıȝe," nec ullo modo scurram agat. Upon this subject we shall have occasion to speak more fully hereafter.

[1] Bartholin de causis contemp. a Danis Mortis, lib. i. cap. 2, et Wormii Lit. Run. ad finim.

[2] Spel. Concil. tom. i. p. 455.

IV.—NATURE OF THE PERFORMANCES BY THE GLEEMEN.

Representations of some of these pastimes are met with occasionally in the early Latin and Saxon manuscripts; and where they do occur, we uniformly find that the illuminators, being totally ignorant of ancient customs and the habits of foreign nations, have not paid the least regard to propriety in the depicting of either, but substituted those of their own time, and by this means they have, without design on their part, become the communicators of much valuable information. The following observations upon two very early paintings will, I doubt not, in great measure confirm the truth of this assertion.

49. Anglo-Saxon Dance.—VIII. Century.

This engraving represents two persons dancing to the music of the horn and the trumpet, and it does not appear to be a common dance in which they are engaged; on the contrary, their attitudes are such as must have rendered it very difficult to perform. On the next page is a curious specimen of a performer's art.

50. Anglo-Saxon Gleeman.—X. Century.

We here see a man throwing three balls and three knives alternately into the air, and catching them one by one as they fall, but returning them again in a regular rotation. To give the greater appearance of difficulty to this feat, it is accompanied with the music of an instrument resembling the modern violin. It is necessary to add, that these two figures, as well as those dancing, previously exhibited, form a part only of two larger paintings, which, in their original state, are placed as frontispieces to the Psalms of David; and in both, the artists have represented that monarch seated upon his throne in the act of playing upon the harp or the lyre, and surrounded by the masters of sacred music. In each the king is depicted considerably larger than the other performers, a compliment usually paid to saints and dignified persons; which absurdity has been frequently practised by the more modern painters. The inferior figures form a sort of border to the sides and bottom of the royal portrait. In addition to the four figures upon the engraving, No. 49, and exclusive of the king, there are four more, all of them instrumental performers; one playing upon the horn, another

upon the trumpet, and the other two upon a kind of tabor or drum, which, however, is beaten with a single drum-stick: the manuscript in which this illumination is preserved, was written as early as the eighth century, and is in the Cotton Collection at the British Museum.[1] The engraving, No. 50, is from a painting on another manuscript in the same collection,[2] more modern than the former by full two centuries, which contains four figures besides the royal psalmist; the two not engraved are musicians: the one is blowing a long trumpet supported by a staff he holds in his left hand, and the other is winding a crooked horn. In a short prologue, immediately preceding the psalms, we read as follows: "David, filius Jesse, in regno suo quatuor elegit qui psalmos fecerunt, id est Asaph, Æman, Æthan, et Idithun;" which may be thus translated literally, "David, the son of Jesse, in his reign elected four persons who composed psalms, that is to say, Asaph, Æman, Æthan, and Idithun." In the painting these four names are separately appropriated, one to each of the four persons there represented; the player upon the violin is called Idithun, and Æthan is tossing up the knives and the balls.

I have been thus particular in describing these curious delineations, because I think they throw much light upon the profession of the Anglo-Saxon gleeman, and prove that his exhibitions were diversified at a very early period; for the reader, I doubt not, will readily agree with me, that dancing and sleights of hand were better calculated for secular pastimes, than for accompaniments to the solemn performances of sacred psalmody. The honest illuminators having no ideas, as I before observed, of foreign or ancient manners, saw not the absurdity of making the Jewish monarch a president over a company of Saxon gleemen; they had heard, no doubt, that these persons whose names they found recorded in the book of Psalms, were poets and musicians; and therefore naturally concluded that they were gleemen, because they knew no others who performed in that double capacity but the gleemen: they knew also, that these facetious artists were greatly venerated by persons of the highest rank, and their company requested by kings and princes, who richly rewarded them for the exercise of their talents, and for this reason, conceived that they were proper companions for the royal psalmist.

[1] Vespasian, A. i. [2] Tiberius, C. vi.

V.—A ROYAL PLAYER WITH THREE DARTS.

The sleight of casting up a certain number of sharp instruments into the air, and catching them alternately in their fall, though part of the gleeman's profession, was not entirely confined to this practice. It is said of Olaf Fryggeson, one of the ancient kings of Norway, that he could play with three darts at once, tossing them in the air, and always kept two up while the third was down in his hand.[1] Our Saxon joculator, however, has the advantage of the monarch by adding the three balls, which of course must have made the trick more difficult to be performed.

VI.—BRAVERY OF A MINSTREL IN THE CONQUEROR'S ARMY.

The celebrated minstrel Taillefer, who came into England with William the Norman, was a warrior as well as a musician. He was present at the battle of Hastings, and appeared at the head of the conqueror's army, singing the songs of Charlemagne and of Roland; but previous to the commencement of the action, he advanced on horseback towards the army of the English, and, casting his spear three times into the air, he caught it as often by the iron head; and the fourth time he threw it among his enemies, one of whom he wounded in the body: he then drew his sword, which he also tossed into the air as many times as he had done his spear, and caught it with such dexterity, that those who saw him attributed his manœuvres to the power of enchantment.

L'un dit al altre ki co veit,
Ke co esteit enchantement.[2]

After he had performed these feats he galloped among the English soldiers, thereby giving the Normans the signal of battle; and in the action it appears he lost his life.

VII.—OTHER PERFORMANCES BY GLEEMEN.

One part of the gleeman's profession, as early as the tenth century, was, teaching animals to dance, to tumble, and to put themselves into variety of attitudes, at the command of their masters.

[1] Pontoppidan. Hist. Norway, p. 148.
[2] Wace, Hist. de tut les Reys de Brittaigne, continued by Geoffrai Gaimer, MS. in the Royal Library, marked 13 A. xxi.

51. Anglo-Saxon Gleemen's Bear Dance.—X. Century.

This engraving is the copy of a curious though rude delineation, being little more than an outline, which exhibits a specimen of this pastime. The principal joculator appears in the front, holding a knotted switch in one hand, and a line attached to a bear in the other; the animal is lying down in obedience to his command; and behind them are two more figures, the one playing upon two flutes or flageolets, and elevating his left leg while he stands upon his right, supported by a staff that passes under his armpit; the other dancing, in an attitude exceedingly ludicrous. This performance takes place upon an eminence resembling a stage made with earth; and in the original a vast concourse are standing round it in a semicircle as spectators of the sport, but they are so exceedingly ill drawn, and withal so indistinct, that I did not think it worth the pains to copy them. The dancing, if I may so call it, of the flute player, is repeated twice in the same manuscript. I have thence selected two other figures.

52. Anglo-Saxon Harper and Hoppestella.—X. Century.

Here we see a youth playing upon a harp with only four strings, and apparently singing at the same time, while an elderly man is performing the part of a buffoon or posture master, holding up one of his legs, and hopping upon the other to the music. Both these drawings occur in a MS. psalter in the Harleian Collection,[1] written in Latin, and apparently about the middle of the tenth century. It contains many drawings, all of them exceedingly rude, and most of them merely outlines. We shall have occasion farther on to speak more largely concerning all these kinds of diversions.

VIII.—THE HARP USED BY THE SAXONS.

The bards and the scalds most assuredly used the harp to accompany their songs and modulate their voices. The Saxon gleemen and joculators followed their example, and are frequently called harpers for that reason; but, at the same time, it is equally certain, that they were well acquainted with several other instruments of music, as the violin, or something very similar to it; pipes or flutes of various kinds; horns and trumpets; to which may be added the tabor, or drum. The harp, indeed, was the most popular, and frequently exercised by persons who did not follow the profession of gleemen. We learn from Bede, an unquestionable authority, that, as early as the seventh century, it was customary at convivial meetings to hand a harp from one person to another, and every one who partook of the festivity played upon it in his turn, singing a song to the music for merriment sake.[2] Bede says, Omnes per ordinem cantare debent; and king Alfred translates the word cantare be hearpan pingan, sing to the harp. The historian adds, that Caedmon, not being acquainted with such sort of songs, gat up when he saw the harp, cytharam, brought near him, and went home; the king adds the reason, Sonne anar he for fceome, then arose he for shame, not being able to comply with the general practice. Probably this was not the practice when the professional harper was present, whose province it was to amuse the company.

IX.—THE NORMAN MINSTRELS.

Soon after the Conquest, these musicians lost the ancient Saxon appellation of gleemen, and were called ministraulx, in

[1] No. 603.

[2] Bede's Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 24.

English minstrels, a term well known in Normandy some time before. They were, however, called harpers by the English rhymists; but the Norman name minstrel was much more commonly used. As the minstrel's art consisted of several branches, the professors were distinguished by different denominations, as, "rimours, chanterres, conteours, jougleours or jongleurs, 'estours, lecours, and troubadours or trouvers;" in modern language, rhymers, singers, story-tellers, jugglers, relaters of heroic actions, buffoons, and poets; but all of them were included under the general name of minstrel. In the Latin, ministerellus, or ministrallus, is also called mimus, mimicus, histrio, joculator, versificator, cantor, and scurra. An eminent French antiquary says of the minstrels, that some of them themselves composed the subjects they sang or related, as the trouvers and the conteurs; and some of them used the compositions of others, as the jogleours and the chanteurs. He farther remarks, that the trouvers may be said to have embellished their productions with rhyme, while the conteurs related their histories in prose; the jugleours, who in the middle ages were famous for playing upon the vielle, accompanied the songs of the trouvers. The vielle was a stringed instrument, sounded by the turning of a wheel within it, resembling that which we frequently see about the streets played by the Savoyards, vulgarly called a hurdy-gurdy. These jugleours were also assisted by the chanteurs: and this union of talents rendered the compositions more harmonious and more pleasing to the auditory, and increased their rewards, so that they readily joined each other, and travelled together in large parties.[1] It is, however, very certain, that the poet, the songster, and the musician, were frequently united in the same person.

X.—TROUBADOURS.

The Norman rhymers appear to have been the genuine descendants of the ancient Scandinavian scalds; they were well known in the northern part of France long before the appearance of the provincial poets called troubadours, and trouvers, that is, finders, probably from the fertility of their invention. The troubadours brought with them into the north a new species of language called the Roman language, which in the eleventh and

[1] Fauchet, Origine de la Langue et Poësie Françoise, 1581, liv. i. chap. viii. fol. 72.

twelfth centuries was commonly used in the southern provinces of France, and there esteemed as the most perfect of any in Europe. It evidently originated from the Latin, and was the parent of the French tongue; and in this language their songs and their poems were composed.[1] These poets were much admired and courted, being, as a very judicious modern writer[2] says, the delight of the brave and the favourites of the fair; because they celebrated the achievements of the one and the beauties of the other. Even princes became troubadours, and wrote poems in the provincial dialect; among others, a monarch of our own country certainly composed verses of this kind. The reader will, I doubt not, readily recollect the common story of Richard I., who, being closely confined in a castle belonging to the duke of Austria, was discovered by his favourite minstrel Blondel, a celebrated troubadour, through the means of a poem composed by the poet, in conjunction with his royal master. The story is thus related in a very ancient French author, quoted by Claude Fauchet: Blondel, seeing that his lord did not return, though it was reported that he had passed the sea from Syria, thought that he was taken by his enemies, and probably very evilly entreated; he therefore determined to find him, and for this purpose travelled through many countries without success: at last he came to a small town, near which was a castle belonging to the duke of Austria; and, having learned from his host that there was a prisoner in the castle who had been confined for upwards of a year, he went thither, and cultivated an acquaintance with the keepers; for a minstrel, says the author, can easily make acquaintance. However, he could not obtain a sight of the prisoner, nor learn his quality; he therefore placed himself near to a window belonging to the tower wherein he was shut up, and sang a few verses of a song which had been composed conjointly by him and his patron. The king, hearing the first part of the song, repeated the second; which convinced the poet, that the prisoner was no other than Richard himself. Hastening therefore into England, he acquainted the barons with his adventure, and they, by means of a large sum of money, procured the liberty of the monarch.[3]

[1] Le Grand, Fables, ou Contes des 12. 13. Siècles, tom. v.
[2] Dr. Henry, Hist. Brit. vol. viii. sect. 3. chap. 5. p. 502.
[3] Fauchet des anciens Poëts François, liv. ii. chap. vii. f. 92; and see Walpole Royal and Noble Authors, vol. i. p. 6.

XI.—JESTOURS.

The conteurs and the jestours, who are also called dissours, and seggers, or sayers, and, in the Latin of that time, fabulatores, and naratores, were literally, in English, tale-tellers, who recited either their own compositions or those of others, consisting of popular tales and romances, for the entertainment of public companies, on occasions of joy and festivity. Gower, a writer contemporary with Chaucer, describing the coronation of a Roman emperor, says,

> When every ministrell had playde,
> And every dissour had sayde,
> Which was most pleasaunt in his ear.[1]

In a manuscript collection of Old Stories, in the Harleian Library, we read of a king who kept a tale-teller on purpose to lull him to sleep every night; but some untoward accident having prevented him from taking his repose so readily as usual, he desired the fabulator to tell him longer stories; who obeyed, and began one upon a more extensive scale, and fell asleep himself in the midst of it.

XII.—TALES AND MANNERS OF THE JESTOURS.

The jestours, or, as the word is often written in the old English dialect, gesters, were the relaters of the gestes, that is, the actions of famous persons, whether fabulous or real; and these stories were of two kinds, the one to excite pity, and the other to move laughter, as we learn from Chaucer:[2]

> And jestours that tellen tales,
> Both of wepying and of game.

The tales of game, as the poet expresses himself, were short jocular stories calculated to promote merriment, in which the reciters paid little respect to the claims of propriety, or even of common decency. The tales of game, however, were much more popular than those of weeping, and probably for the very reason that ought to have operated the most powerfully for their suppression. The gestours, whose powers were chiefly employed in the hours of conviviality, finding by experience that lessons of instruction were much less seasonable at such times, than idle tales productive of mirth and laughter, accommodated

[1] Confessio Amantis, lib. vii.

[2] The thirde boke of Fame.

their narrations to the general taste of the times, regardless of the mischiefs they occasioned by vitiating the morals of their hearers; hence it is, that the author of the Vision of Pierce the Ploughman calls them contemptibly "japers, and juglers, and janglers of gests."[1] He describes them also as haunters of taverns and common ale-houses, amusing the lower classes of the people with "myrth of minstrelsy and losels tales," loose vulgar tales, and calls them tale-tellers and "tutelers in ydell," tutors of idleness, occasioning their auditory, "for love of tales, in tavernes to drink," where they learned from them to jangle and to jape, instead of attending to their more serious duties, he therefore makes one to say,

> I can not parfitly my pater noster as the priest it singeth,
> But I can ryms of Roben Hode, and Randol erl of Chester
> But of our Lord or our Lady I lerne nothing at all:
> I am occupied every daye, holy daye, and other,
> With idle tales at the ale.[2]—

He then blames the opulent for rewarding these "devils dissours," as he calls them, and adds,

> He is worse than Judas that giveth a japer silver.[3]

The japers, I apprehend, were the same as the bourdours, or rybauders, an inferior class of minstrels, and properly called jesters in the modern acceptation of the word; whose wit, like that of the merry-andrews of the present day, consisted in low obscenity, accompanied with ludicrous gesticulation. They sometimes, however, found admission into the houses of the opulent. Knighton indeed mentions one of these japers who was a favourite in the English court, and could obtain any grant from the king "a burdando," that is, by jesting. They are well described by the poet:

> As japers and janglers, Judas chyldren,
> Fayneth them fantasies, and fooles them maketh.[4]

It was a very common and a very favourite amusement, so late as the sixteenth century, to hear the recital of verses and moral speeches, learned for that purpose, by a set of men who obtained their livelihood thereby, and who, without ceremony, intruded themselves, not only into taverns and other places of public resort, but also into the houses of the nobility.

[1] Edition of 1550.
[2] The ale here evidently implies the place where ale was sold. Ibid. pass. I.
[3] A reward. Ibid. pass. xi.
[4] P. Ploughman, pass. primus

XIII.—FURTHER ILLUSTRATION OF THEIR PRACTICES.

The different talents of the minstrels are sarcastically described by an ancient French poet;[1] who, supposing a company of them assembled in the hall of an opulent nobleman, says, the count caused it to be made known to them, that he would give his best new scarlet robe to the minstrel who should occasion the most merriment, either by ridiculous words or by actions, la meillor truffe—dire ne faire. This proposal occasioned them to strive with each other; some of them imitated the imbecility of drunkards, others the actions of fools, some sang, others piped, li autre note, which properly signifies the pricking, or writing of musical notes, but it is also applied to the playing upon pipes and other musical instruments by note; some talked nonsense, and some made scurrilous jests; those who understood the juggler's art played upon the vielle, cil qui sevent la jouglerie vielant; and here it may be noted, that the vielle seems to have been an instrument of music chiefly used by the jugglers; others of them depended on the narration of quaint fables, which were productive of much laughter. So far the poet; and, if his statement be not very distant from the truth, we shall not wonder at the outcry of our moral and religious writers against such a mean and mercenary set of men, who were ready at command to prostitute their abilities to the worst of purposes, and encourage the growth of immorality and dissipation; the charge indeed is heavy, but I fear it will be found to stand upon a strong and permanent foundation.

XIV.—PATRONAGE, PRIVILEGES, AND EXCESSES OF THE MINSTRELS.

There is great reason to conclude that the professors of music were more generally encouraged, and of course more numerous in this country, subsequent to the Norman conquest, than they had been under the government of the Saxons. We are told, that the courts of princes swarmed with poets and minstrels. The earls also and great barons, who in their castles emulated the pomp and state of royalty, had their poets and minstrels: they formed part of their household establishment; and, exclusive of their wages, were provided with board, lodging, and

[1] Fabiliaux et Contes, edit. Par. tom. ii. p. 161.

clothing by their patrons, and frequently travelled with them when they went from home.

These minstrels, as well as those belonging to the court, were permitted to perform in the rich monasteries, and in the mansions of the nobility, which they frequently visited in large parties, and especially upon occasions of festivity. They entered the castles without the least ceremony, rarely waiting for any previous invitation, and there exhibited their performances for the entertainment of the lord of the mansion and his guests. They were, it seems, admitted without any difficulty, and handsomely rewarded for the exertion of their talents.

It was no uncommon thing with the itinerant minstrels to find admission into the houses of the opulent. The Saxon and the Danish gleemen followed the armies in the time of war, and had access to both the camps without the least molestation. The popular story of king Alfred, recorded by William of Malmsbury and other writers, may be mentioned in proof of this assertion. He, it is said, assumed the character of a gleeman, sub specie mimi—ut joculatoriæ professor artis,[1] and entered the Danish camp, where he made such observations as were of infinite service. To this we may add the authority of Ingulphus, whose words are, singens se joculatorem, assumpta cithara, &c.[2] This stratagem was afterwards repeated by Anlaff, or Aulaff, the Dane, who was equally successful. He assumed, says the historian, professionem mimi, the profession of the mimic, "who by this species of art makes a daily gain;" and then adds, "being commanded to depart, he took with him the reward for his song."[3]

The extensive privileges enjoyed by the minstrels, and the long continuance of the public favour, inflated their pride and made them insolent; they even went so far as to claim their reward by a prescriptive right, and settled its amount according to the estimation they had formed of their own abilities, and the opulence of the noblemen into whose houses they thought proper to intrude. The large gratuities collected by these artists not only occasioned great numbers to join their fraternity, but also induced many idle and dissipated persons to assume the characters of minstrels, to the disgrace of the profession. These evils became at last so notorious, that in the reign of king Edward II. it was thought necessary to restrain

[1] Malmsb. lib. ii. cap. 4. [2] Hist. p. 869. [3] Ibid. lib ii. cap. 6.

them by a public edict, which sufficiently explains the nature of the grievance. It states, that many indolent persons, under the colour of minstrelsy, intruded themselves into the residences of the wealthy, where they had both meat and drink, but were not contented without the addition of large gifts from the householder. To restrain this abuse, the mandate ordains, that no person should resort to the houses of prelates, earls, or barons, to eat, or to drink, who was not a professed minstrel; nor more than three or four minstrels of honour at most in one day, meaning, I presume, the king's minstrels and those retained by the nobility, except they came by invitation from the lord of the house.

Thus we read in the old romance of Launfel,

> They had menstrelles of moche honours,
> Fydelers, sytolyrs, and trompoters.

The edict also prohibits a professed minstrel from going to the house of any person below the dignity of a baron, unless invited by the master; and, in that case, it commands him to be contented with meat and drink, and such reward as the housekeeper willingly offered, without presuming to ask for any thing. For the first offence the minstrel lost his minstrelsy, and for the second he was obliged to forswear his profession, and was never to appear again as a minstrel.[1] This edict is dated from Langley, 6, an. 9 Edward II. A.D. 1315.

XV.—A GUILD OF MINSTRELS.

In little more than a century afterwards, the same grievances became again the subject of complaint; and in the ninth year of Edward IV. it was stated, that certain rude husbandmen and artificers of various trades had assumed the title and livery of the king's minstrels, and, under that colour and pretence, had collected money in divers parts of the kingdom, and committed other disorders; the king therefore granted to Walter Haliday, marshal, and to seven others, his own minstrels, named by him, a charter, by which he created, or rather restored, a fraternity, or perpetual guild, such as the king understood the brothers and sisters of the fraternity of minstrels to have possessed in former time; and we shall see, a little further on, that the minstrel's art, or part of it at least, was practised by females in the time of the Saxons. This fraternity was to be governed by

[1] App. to Leland's Collect. vol. vi. p. 36.

a marshal appointed for life, the same office as that anciently possessed by the king of the minstrels,[1] and two wardens, who were empowered to admit members into the guild, and to regulate and govern, and to punish, when necessary, all such as exercised the profession of minstrels throughout the kingdom. The minstrels of Chester, who had by charter several peculiar privileges, are excepted in this act.

XVI.—ABUSES AND DECLINE OF MINSTRELSY.

It does not appear that much good was effected by the foregoing institution; it neither corrected the abuses practised by the fraternity, nor retrieved their reputation, which declined apace from this period. Under queen Elizabeth, the minstrels had lost the protection of the opulent; and their credit was sunk so low in the public estimation, that, by a statute in the thirty-ninth year of her reign against vagrants, they were included among the rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and subjected to the like punishments. This edict also affected all fencers, bearwards, common players of interludes (with the exception of such players as belonged to great personages, and were authorised to play under the hand and seal of their patrons), as well as minstrels wandering abroad, jugglers, tinkers, and pedlars; and seems to have given the death's wound to the profession of the minstrels, who had so long enjoyed the public favour, and basked in the sunshine of prosperity. The name, however, remained, and was applied to itinerant fiddlers and other musicians, whose miserable state is thus described by Putenham, in his Arte of English Poesie, printed in 1589:[2] "Ballads and small popular musickes sung by these cantabanqui upon benches and barrels heads, where they have none other audience than boyes or countrye fellowes that passe by them in the streete, or else by blind harpers, or such like taverne minstrels that give a fit of mirth for a groat; and their matters being for the most part stories of old time, as the tale of sir Topas, Bevis of Southampton, Guy of Warwick, Adam Bell and Clymme of the Clough, and such other old romances or historical rhimes, made purposely for the recreation of the common people at Christmas dinners and bride ales, and in tavernes and alehouses, and such other places of base

[1] At this time there was also a sergeant of the minstrels. See Essay on Ancient Minstrels, Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. i.

[2] Book ii. chap. 9.

resort." Bishop Hall, the satirist, adverts to the low estate of the minstrels at this time, in the two last lines of the following couplet:

> Much better than a Paris-garden beare,
> Or prating puppet on a theatre,
> Or Mimoes whistling to his tabouret,
> Selling a laughter for a cold meales meat.[1]

It is necessary, however, to observe, that public and private bands of musicians were called minstrels for a considerable time after this period, and without the least indication of disgrace; but then the appellation seems to have been confined to the instrumental performers, and such of them as were placed upon a regular establishment: the musicians of the city of London, for instance, were called indifferently waits and minstrels.[2] In the reign of Henry VII. there were musicians belonging to the royal household, called stryng minstrels.

We hear of the itinerant musicians again in an ordinance from Oliver Cromwell, dated 1656, during his protectorship, which prohibits "all persons commonly called fidlers, or minstrells," from "playing, fidling, and making music, in any inn, alehouse, or tavern;" and also from "proffering themselves, or desireing, or intreating any one to hear them play, or make music in the places aforesaid." The only vestige of these musical vagrants now remaining, is to be found in the blind fiddlers wandering about the country, and the ballad singers, who frequently accompany their ditties with instrumental music, especially the fiddle, vulgarly called a crowd, and the guitar. And here we may observe, that the name of fiddlers was applied to the minstrels as early at least as the fourteenth century: it occurs in the Vision of Pierce the Ploughman,[3] where we read, "not to fare as a fydeler, or a frier, to seke feastes." It is also used, but not sarcastically, in the poem of Launfel.[4]

XVII.—MINSTRELS WERE SATIRISTS AND FLATTERERS.

The British bards employed their musical talents in the praise of heroic virtue, or in the censure of vice, apparently without any great expectation of reward on the one hand, or fear of punishment on the other. The Scandinavian scalds celebrated

[1] Lib. iv. sat. i.
[2] Stow's Survey of Lond. p. 84 and 85
[3] Pass. xi.
[4] See p. 184.

the valiant actions of their countrymen in appropriate verses; and sometimes accompanied the warriors to the field of battle, that they might behold their exploits and describe them with more accuracy. The gleemen of the Saxons imitated their predecessors, and attached themselves to the persons of princes and chieftains, and retained their favour by continual adulation. The minstrels of the Normans trod in the same steps, but seem to have been more venal, and ready at all times to flatter or to satirize, as best suited their interest, without paying much regard to justice on either side.

XVIII.—ANECDOTES OF OFFENDING MINSTRELS.

Is is said of William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, chancellor and justiciary of England, who was also the Pope's legate, and a great favourite of Richard I., that he kept a number of poets in his pay, to make songs and poems in his praise; and also, that with great gifts he allured many of the best singers and minstrels from the continent, to sing those songs in the public streets of the principal cities in England.[1]

It was, on the other hand, a very dangerous employment to censure the characters of great personages, or hold their actions up to ridicule; for, though the satirist might be secure at the moment, he was uncertain that fortune would not one day or another put him into the power of his adversary, which was the case with Luke de Barra, a celebrated Norman minstrel; who, in his songs having made very free with the character of Henry I. of England, by some untoward accident fell into the hands of the irritated monarch. He condemned him to have his eyes pulled out: and, when the earl of Flanders, who was present, pleaded warmly in his favour, the king replied: "This man, being a wit, a poet, and a minstrel, composed many indecent songs against me, and sung them openly to the great entertainment of mine enemies; and, since it has pleased God to deliver him into my hands, I will punish him, to deter others from the like petulance." The cruel sentence was executed, and the miserable satirist died soon after with the wounds he had received in struggling with the executioner.[2] The gratification of a mean

[1] Benedict. Abbas, sub an. 1190. Hoveden writes thus: "Cantores et joculatores de illo canerent in plateis; ut jam dicebatur ubique quod non erat talis in orbe;" declaring every where that his equal was not in the world. Hist. p. 103.

[2] Orderic. Vitalis, Eccles. Hist. pp. 880, 881.

revenge is a strong mark of a little mind; and this inhumanity reflects great discredit upon the king: it would have been noble in him to have pardoned the unfortunate culprit.

Again, in the reign of king Edward II., at the solemnization of the feast of Pentecost in the great hall at Westminster, when that prince was seated at dinner in royal state, and attended by the peers of the realm, a woman habited like a minstrel, riding upon a great horse trapped in the minstrel fashion, entered the hall, and, going round the several tables, imitated the gestures of a mimic,[1] and at length mounted the steps to the royal table, upon which she deposited a letter; and, having so done, she turned her horse, and saluting all the company, retired. The letter was found to contain some very severe reflections upon the conduct of the monarch, which greatly angered him; and the actress, being arrested by his command, discovered the author of the letter, who acknowledged the offence and was pardoned; but the door-keeper, being reprimanded on account of her admission, excused himself, by declaring it had never been customary to prevent the entry of minstrels and persons in disguisements, upon the supposition that they came for the entertainment of his majesty.[2] This woman had probably assumed the habit of a man, and a female was chosen on this occasion, according to the opinion of an eminent modern author, Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore,[3] because, upon detection, her sex might plead for her, and disarm the king's resentment. It is, however, certain that at this time, and long before it, there were women who practised the minstrel's art, or at least some branches of it. We read of the glee-maidens, or female minstrels, from ȝilp-meðen and ȝlýþienðe-maðen, in the Saxon records; and I believe, that their province in general was to dance and to tumble, whence they acquired the name of tomblesteres, from the Saxon ꝛumbian, to dance or tumble, and saylours, from salio, to leap or dance, in the time of Chaucer, who uses both these denominations.[4]

[1] The author uses these words: "Intravit quædam mulier ornata histrionali habitu, equum bonum insidens histrionaliter phaleratum, quæ mensas more histrionem circuivit," &c. Tho. Walsingham, Hist. Anglæ sub an. 1317, p. 85.

[2] Non esse moris domûs regiæ histriones ab ingressu quemlibet prohibere.

[3] Essay upon Ancient Minstrels, in Reliques of Ancient Poetry.

[4] The first in the Pardoner's Tale, and the last in the Romance of the Rose. See the article on tumbling and dancing in a succeeding section.

XIX.—THE DRESS OF THE MINSTRELS.

It is very clear, that the minstrels wore a peculiar kind of dress by which they might readily be distinguished: the woman above mentioned is expressly said to have been habited like a mimic or a minstrel, and by that means obtained admission without the least difficulty to the royal presence. I remember also a story recorded in a manuscript, written about the reign of Edward III., of a young man of family, who came to a feast, where many of the nobility were present, in a vesture called a coat bardy, cut short in the German fashion, and resembling the dress of a minstrel. The oddity of his habit attracted the notice of the company, and especially of an elderly knight, to whom he was well known, who thus addressed him: "Where, my friend, is your fiddle, your ribible, or such-like instrument belonging to a minstrel?" "Sir," replied the young man, "I have no crafte nor science in using such instruments." "Then," returned the knight, "you are much to blame; for, if you choose to debase yourself and your family by appearing in the garb of a minstrel, it is fitting you should be able to perform his duty."[1] On a column in Saint Mary's church at Beverley in Yorkshire is the following inscription: "This pillar made the mynstrylls;" its capital is decorated with five men in short coats, and one of them holds an instrument like a lute.[2] The minstrels retained in noblemen's families wore their lords' livery; and those appertaining to the royal household did the same. The edict of Edward IV. against the pretended minstrels, mentioned above, expressly says, that they assumed the name, and the livery or dress, of the king's own minstrels.[3] The queen had also minstrels in her service, who probably wore a livery different from those of the king for distinction-sake. In a computus of expences, an. 11 Edw. III. in the Cotton Library, is this entry: "Johanni de Mees de Lorem. et Petro de Wurgund. ministrallis dominæ reginæ, facientibus ministralsias suas coram domino rege apud Eboracum;" for which they received from the king's own hand six shillings and eight pence each.[4] The following lines, which are somewhat to the purpose, occur in an old historical poem, in the Harleian Collection: they relate

[1] Harl. MS. 1764.
[2] Sir John Hawkin's History of Music, vol. ii. p. 298.
[3] See p. 184.
[4] MS. Nero, C viii.

to sir Edward Stanley, who is highly praised by the author for his great skill in playing upon all kinds of instruments:

> He stood before the kinge, doubtless this was true,
> In a fayre gowne of cloth of gold, and of tilshewe,
> Lyke no common mynstrel, to shew taverne mirth,
> But lyke a noble man, both of lands, and of birth.[1]

And again, in the history of John Newchombe, the famous clothier of Newbury, usually called Jack of Newbury, it is said, "They had not sitten long, but in comes a noise[2] of musicians in tawnie coats; who, putting off their caps, asked if they would have any music?"

It appears that the minstrels sometimes shaved the crowns of their heads like the monks, and also assumed an ecclesiastical habit; this was probably an external garment only, and used when they travelled from place to place. The succeeding anecdote will prove that the ecclesiastics and the mimics were not always readily distinguished from each other: Two itinerant priests coming towards night to a cell of the Benedictines near Oxford, they there, upon the supposition of their being mimics, or minstrels, gained admittance; but the cellarer, the sacrist, and others of the brethren, disappointed in the expectation they had formed of being entertained with mirthful performances, and finding them to be nothing more than two indigent ecclesiastics, beat them, and turned them out of the monastery.[3]

XX.—THE KING OF THE MINSTRELS.

The king's minstrel, frequently in Latin called joculator regis or the king's juggler, was an officer of rank in the courts of the Norman monarchs. He had the privilege of accompanying his master when he journeyed, and of being near his person; and probably was the regulator of the royal sports, and appointed the other minstrels belonging to the household; for which reason, I presume, he was also called the king, or chief of the minstrels. At what time this title was first conferred on him does not appear: we meet with it, however, in an account of the public expenditures made in the fifth year of Edward I.; at which time, the king of the minstrels, whose name was Robert,

[1] Harl. MS. 541.

[2] The word noise signifies a company. The reader will find the application of many such terms to different trades and professions in p. 24.

[3] Hist. and Antiq. Oxon. lib. i. p. 67, sub an. 1224.

received his master's pay for military services.[1] The same name, with the same title annexed to it, occurs again in a similar record, dated the fourth year of Edward II.; when he, in company with various other minstrels, exhibeted before the king and his court, then held in the city of York; and received forty marks, to be by him distributed among the fraternity.[2]

The title of royalty was not confined to the king's chief minstrel: it was also bestowed upon the regent of other companies of musicians, as we find in a charter granted by John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, to the minstrels of Tutbury in Staffordshire. This document he addresses, under his seal, at the castle of Tutbury, August 24, in the fourth year of Richard II., to nostre bene ame le roy des ministraulx, his well beloved the king of the minstrels; and concedes to him full power and commission to oblige the minstrels belonging to the honour of Tutbury to perform their services and minstrelsies in the same manner that they had been accustomed to be done in ancient times.[3] In a ballad intituled "The marriage of Robin Hood and Clorinda the Queen of Tutbury Feast,"[4] written probably after the disgrace of the minstrels, this officer is called the king of the fidlers. The poet supposes himself to have been present at the wedding, and witness of the facts he relates; and therefore he speaks thus:

> This battle was fought near to Titbury town,
> When the bagpipes baited the bull.
> I am king of the fidlers, and swear 'tis a truth,
> And I call him that doubts it a gull.

Claude Fauchet, a French author of eminence, before quoted, speaking concerning the title of king, formerly given to many officers belonging to the court, makes these observations: "I am well assured, the word king signifies comptroller, or head, as the chief heralds are called kings at arms, because it belonged solely to them to regulate the ceremonies of the justs and tournaments." He then applies this reasoning to the Roy des Ribaulx, an officer in the ancient court of France;[5] and says, his charge

[1] "Regi Roberto ministrallo, scut. ad arma commoranti ad vadia regis, capientur per diem 12 en." &c. MS. Cott. Vespasianus, C. xvi.

[2] "Regi Roberto, et aliis ministrallis diversis, facientibus ministralsias suas coram rege et aliis magnatibus, de dono ipsius regis, per manus dicti regis Roberti, recipientis denarios ad participandum inter eosdem, apud Eboracum, 20 die Feb. 40 marc." MS. Cott. Nero, C. viii.

[3] Dugd. Monast. vol. i. fol. 355.

[4] Collection of Old Ballads, London, 1723.

[5] Chaucer, in the Romance of the Rose, where the title Roy des Ribaulx occurs in the original, translates it "king of harlotes."

was to clear the palace of indolent and disorderly persons, who followed the court, and had no business there; and had his title as king of vagabonds, because he was the examiner and corrector of dissolute persons.[1] In like manner, I presume, in this country, the king of the minstrels was the governor and director of the fraternity over which he presided. The title was dropped in the reign of Edward IV., and that of marshal became its substitute.

XXI.—REWARDS GIVEN TO MINSTRELS.

In the middle ages, the courts of princes, and the residences of the opulent, were crowded with minstrels; and such large sums of money were expended for their maintenance, that the public treasuries were often drained. Matilda, queen to Henry I., is said to have lavished the greater part of her revenue upon poets and minstrels, and oppressed her tenants to procure more.[2] She was, however, by no means singular in so doing, as the invectives of the monks sufficiently demonstrate. These selfish professors of religion grudged every act of munificence that was not applied to themselves, or their monasteries; and could not behold the good fortune of the minstrels without expressing their indignation; which they often did in terms of scurrilous abuse, calling them janglers, mimics, buffoons, monsters of men, and contemptible scoffers. They also severely censured the nobility for patronizing and rewarding such a shameless set of sordid flatterers, and the populace for frequenting their exhibitions, and being delighted with their performances, which diverted them from more serious pursuits, and corrupted their morals.[3] On the other hand, the minstrels appear to have been ready enough to give them ample occasion for censure; and, indeed, I apprehend that their own immorality and insolence contributed more to their downfal, than all the defamatory declamations of their opponents. The ecclesiastics were mightily pleased with the conduct of the emperor Henry III., because, at his marriage with Agnes of Poictou, he disappointed the poor minstrels who had assembled in great multitudes on the occasion, giving them neither food nor rewards, but "sent them away,"

[1] Origines des Dignitez et Magistrats de France, fol. 43.
[2] Will. Malmsb. p. 93, col. 1.
[3] Johan. Sarisburiensis de Nugis Curial. lib. i. cap. 8; lib. iii. cap. 7. Matt. Paris, in Vit. Hen. III. sub an. 1251, &c.

says a monkish author, "with empty purses, and hearts full of sorrow."[1] But to go on.

The rewards given to the minstrels did not always consist in money, but frequently in rich mantles and embroidered vestments: they received, says Fauchet, great presents from the nobility, who would sometimes give them even the robes with which they were clothed. It was a common custom in the middle ages to give vestments of different kinds to the minstrels. In an ancient poem, cited by Fauchet, called La Robe Vermeille, or, The Red Robe, the wife of a vavaser, that is, one who, holding of a superior lord, has tenants under him, reproaches her husband for accepting a robe; "Such gifts," says she, "belong to jugglers, and other singing men, who receive garments from the nobility, because it is their trade:

S'appartient à ces jorgleours,
Et à ces autres chanteours,
Quils ayent de ces chevaliers,
Les robes car c'est lor mestier."[2]

These garments the jugglers failed not to take with them to other courts, in order to excite a similar liberality. Another artifice they often used, which was, to make the heroes of their poems exceedingly bountiful to the minstrels, who appear to have been introduced for that purpose: thus, in the metrical romance of Ipomedon, where the poet speaks of the knight's marriage, he says—

Ipomydon gaff, in that stound,
To mynstrelles five hundred pound.[3]

The author of Pierce the Ploughman, who lived in the reign of Edward III., gives the following general description of the different performances of the minstrels, and of their rewards, at that period:

I am mynstrell, quoth that man; my name is Activa Vita;
All Idle iche hate,[4] for All Active is my name;
A wafrer[5] well ye wyt; and serve many lordes,
And few robes I get, or faire furred gownes.
Could I lye, to do[6] men laugh; then lachen[7] I should
Nother mantill, nor money, amonges lords minstrels:
And, for[8] I can neither taber, ne trumpe, ne tell no gestes,
Fartin ne fislen, at feastes, ne harpen;

[1] "Infinitum histrionum et joculatorum multitudinem, sine cibo et muneribus, vacuam et mœrentum abire permisit." Chron. Virtziburg.
[2] Origine de la Langue et Poësie Françoise, lib. i. cap. 4.
[3] Harl. MS. 2252.
[4] All idleness I hate.
[5] A confectioner.
[6] That is, if he could tell falsehoods to make men laugh.
[7] Lack, or want.
[8] Because.

Jape, ne juggle, ne gentilly pype,
Ne neither saylen ne saute,[1] ne singe to the gytterne,
I have no good giftes to please the great lordes.

And, if we refer to history, we shall find that the poets are not incorrect in their statement. Gaston earl of Foix, whose munificence is much commended by Froissart, lived in a style of splendour little inferior to that of royalty. The historian, speaking of a grand entertainment given by this nobleman, which he had an opportunity of seeing, says, "Ther wer many mynstrells, as well of his own, as of straungers; and each of them dyd their devoyre, in their faculties.[2] The same day the earl of Foix gave to the heraulds and minstrelles the som of five hundred frankes; and gave to the duke of Tourayn's minstrelles gownes of cloth of gold, furred with ermyne, valued at two hundred frankes."[3]

Respecting the pecuniary rewards of the minstrels, we have, among others, the following accounts. At the marriage of Elizabeth, daughter of Edward I. to John earl of Holland, every king's minstrel received forty shillings.[4] In the fourth of Edward II. Perrot de la Laund, minstrel to lord Hugh de Nevill, received twenty shillings for performing his minstrelsy before the king.[5] In the same year, Janino la Cheveretter, who is called Le Tregettour,[6] was paid at one time forty shillings, and at another twenty, for the same service; and John le Mendlesham, the boy[7] of Robert le Foll, twenty shillings;[8] the same sum was also given to John le Boteller, the boy of Perrot Duzedeys, for his performances; and, again, Perrot Duzedeys, Roger the Trumpeter, and Janino le Nakerer, all of them king's minstrels, received from the king sixty shillings for the like service.

XXII.—PAYMENTS TO MINSTRELS.

In the eighth year of Edward III., licence was granted to Barbor the Bagpiper, to visit the schools for minstrels in parts

[1] Dance, nor jump. Pass. xiv.
[2] Duty in their several stations.
[3] Lord Berners' Froissart, vol. iv. cap. 41.
[4] Anstis, Ord. Gart. vol. ii. p. 303.
[5] Liber de Computis Garderobæ, MS. Cott. Lib. Nero, C. viii. fol. 82.
[6] Cheveretter, or bagpiper; from chevre, a bagpipe, and tregettor, or juggler, a slight of hand player; Ibid. See more on this subject in the next chapter relating to the joculator.
[7] Garcionis; from the French garçon, a boy, or lad. In this instance it probably means an apprentice, or servant. Ibid. p. 83.
[8] Another entry specifies twenty shillings paid to Robert le Foll to buy himself boclarium, a buckler, to play, ad ludendum, before the king. Ibid. p. 85.

beyond the seas,[1] with thirty shillings to bear his expenses. Licence was also granted to Morlan the Bagpiper, to visit the minstrels' schools; and forty shillings for his expenses.[2] A little lower we find a present of five shillings made by the king to a minstrel, for performing his minstrelsy before the image of the Blessed Virgin.[3] In the eleventh year of the same reign, John de Hoglard, minstrel to John de Pulteney, was paid forty shillings for exhibiting before the king at Hatfield, and at London;[4] and to Roger the Trumpeter, and to the minstrels his associates, performing at the feast for the queen's delivery, held at Hatfield, ten pounds.[5] In the ninth year of Henry VII. "Pudesay the piper in bagpipes," received six shillings and eight pence from the king, for his performance.[6] In the fourteenth year of his reign, five pounds were paid to three stryng-mynstrels for wages, but the time is not specified; in a subsequent entry, however, we find that fifteen shillings were given to "a stryng-mynstrel, for one moneth's wages;" also to a "straunge taberer, in reward, sixty-six shillings and eight pence."[7]

XXIII.—WEALTH OF CERTAIN MINSTRELS.

In the middle ages, the professors of minstrelsy had the opportunity of amassing much wealth; and certainly some of them were men of property. In Domesday Book, it appears that Berdic, the king's joculator, had lands in Gloucestershire;[8] Raher, or Royer, mimus rex, the mimic, or minstrel, belonging to Henry I., was the founder of the hospital and priory of Saint Bartholomew, in West Smithfield;[9] and the minstrels contributed towards building the church of Saint Mary, at Beverley in Yorkshire, as the inscription on one of the pillars plainly indicates;[10] though, it must be owned, their general character does not bear the marks of prudence, as the reader must have observed in the perusal of this section.

[1] "Scolas ministrallis in partibus trans mare." Liber de Computis Garderobæ, MS. Cott. Lib. Nero, C. viii. p. 276.

[2] Ibid.

[3] "Facienti ministralsiam suam coram imagine Beatæ Mariæ in Veltam, rege presente, 5 sol." Ibid. p. 277.

[4] Ibid. p. 290.

[5] Ibid.

[6] MS. in the Remembrancer's Office. See the extract in Dr. Henry's British History, vol. vi. Appendix, No. V.

[7] From another MS. in the same office. Ibid.

[8] See the next chapter, under the account of the joculators.

[9] Leland's Collectanea, pp. 61. 99.

[10] See p. 189.

XXIV.—MINSTRELS SOMETIMES DANCING MASTERS.

It has already been observed, that the name of minstrels was frequently applied to instrumental performers, who did not profess any other branch of the minstrelsy. In an old morality called Lusty Juventus, it is said,

> Who knoweth where is ere a mynstrel?
> By the Masse, I would fayne go daunce a fit.[1]

This passage calls to my memory a circumstance recorded by Fauchet, which proves that the minstrels were sometimes dancing masters. "I remember," says he, "to have seen Martin Baraton, an aged minstrel of Orleans, who was accustomed to play upon the tambourine at weddings, and on other occasions of festivity. His instrument was silver, decorated with small plates of the same metal,[2] on which were engraved the arms of those he had taught to dance."

[1] Garrick's Collection of Old Plays.

[2] "Un tabourin d'argent semé de plaques aussi d'argent." Origine de la Langue et Poësie Françoise, lib. i. cap. viii. fol. 72

CHAPTER IV.

I. The Joculator.—II. His different Denominations and extraordinary Deceptions.—III. His Performances ascribed to Magic.—IV. Asiatic Jugglers.—V. Remarkable Story from Froissart.—VI. Tricks of the Jugglers ascribed to the Agency of the Devil; but more reasonably accounted for.—VII. John Rykell, a celebrated Tregetour.—VIII. Their various Performances.—IX. Privileges of the Joculators at Paris.—The King's Joculator an Officer of Rank.—X. The great Disrepute of modern Jugglers.

I.—THE JOCULATOR

THE joculator, or the jugglour of the Normans, was frequently included under the collective appellation of minstrel. His profession originally was very comprehensive, and included the practice of all the arts attributed to the minstrel; and some of the jugglers were excellent tumblers. Joinville, in the Life of St. Louis and Charpentier, quotes an old author, who speaks of a joculator, qui sciebat tombare.[1] He was called a gleeman in the Saxon era, and answers to the juggler of the more modern times. In the fourteenth century, he was also denominated a tregetour, or tragetour, at which time, he appears to have been separated from the musical poets, who exercised the first branches of the gleeman's art, and are more generally considered as minstrels.

II.—DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS OF THE JOCULATOR, AND HIS EXTRAORDINARY DECEPTIONS.

The name of tregetours was chiefly, if not entirely, appropriated to those artists who, by slight of hand, with the assistance of machinery of various kinds, deceived the eyes of the spectators, and produced such illusions as were usually supposed to be the effect of enchantment; for which reason they were frequently ranked with magicians, sorcerers, and witches; and, indeed, the feats they performed, according to the descriptions given of them, abundantly prove that they were no contemptible practitioners in the arts of deception. Chaucer, who, no doubt, had frequently an opportunity of seeing the tricks exhibited by the tregetours in his time, says, 'There

[1] Supplement to Du Cange.

I sawe playenge jogelours, magyciens, trageteours, phetonysses, charmeresses, olde witches, and sorceresses," &c.[1] He speaks of them in a style that may well excite astonishment: "There are," says he, "sciences by which men can delude the eye with divers appearances, such as the subtil tregetours perform at feasts. In a large hall they will produce water with boats rowed up and down upon it." In the library of Sir Hans Sloane, at the British Museum, is a MS.[2] which contains "an experiment to make the appearance of a flode of water to come into a house." The directions are, to steep a thread in the liquor produced from snakes' eggs bruised, and to hang it up over a basin of water in the place where the trick is to be performed. The tregetours, no doubt, had recourse to a surer method. Chaucer goes on to say, "Sometimes they will bring in the similitude of a grim lion, or make flowers spring up as in a meadow; sometimes they cause a vine to flourish, bearing white and red grapes; or show a castle built with stone; and when they please, they cause the whole to disappear." He then speaks of "a learned clerk," who, for the amusement of his friend, showed to him "forests full of wild deer, where he saw an hundred of them slain, some with hounds and some with arrows; the hunting being finished, a company of falconers appeared upon the banks of a fair river, where the birds pursued the herons, and slew them. He then saw knights justing upon a plain;" and, by way of conclusion, "the resemblance of his beloved lady dancing; which occasioned him to dance also." But, when "the maister that this magike wrought thought fit, he clapped his hands together, and all was gone in an instante."[3] Again, in another part of his works, the same poet says,

> There saw I Coll Tregetour,
> Upon a table of sycamour,
> Play an uncouthe thynge to tell;
> I sawe hym cary a wynde-mell
> Under a walnote shale.[4]

III.—THE JOCULATORS' PERFORMANCES ASCRIBED TO MAGIC.

Chaucer attributes these illusions to the practice of natural magic. Thus the Squire, in his Tale, says,

> An appearance made by some magyke,
> As jogglours playen at their festes grete.

[1] Chaucer, House of Fame, book iii.
[2] No. 1315.
[3] Frankeleyn's Tale.
[4] House of Fame, book iii.

And again, in the third book of the House of Fame,

> And clerkes eke which conne well
> All this magyke naturell.

Meaning, I suppose, an artful combination of different powers of nature in a manner not generally understood; and therefore he makes the Devil say to the Sompner in the Friar's Tale, "I can take any shape that pleases me; of a man, of an ape, or of an angel; and it is no wonder, a lousy juggler can deceive you; and I can assure you my skill is superior to his." I need not say, that a greater latitude was assigned to what the poet calls natural magic in his days, than will be granted in the present time.

IV.—ASIATIC JUGGLERS.

Sir John Mandevile, who wrote about the same period as Chaucer, speaks thus of a similar exhibition performed before the Great Chan: "And then comen jogulours, and enchauntours, that doen many marvaylles;" for they make, says he, the appearance of the sun and the moon in the air; and then they make the night so dark, that nothing can be seen; and again they restore the day-light, with the sun shining brightly; then they "bringen-in daunces, of the fairest damsels of the world, and the richest arrayed:" afterwards they make other damsels to come in, bringing cups of gold, full of the milk of divers animals, and give drink to the lords and ladies; and then "they make knyghts jousten in armes fulle lustily," who run together, and in the encounter break their spears so rudely, that the splinters fly all about the hall.[1] They also bring in a hunting of the hart and of the boar, with hounds running at them open-mouthed; and many other things they do by the craft of their enchantments, that are "marvellous to see." In another part he says, "And be it done by craft, or by nicromancy, I wot not."[2]

V.—REMARKABLE STORY FROM FROISSART.

The foregoing passages bring to my recollection a curious piece of history related by Froissart, which extends the practice of these deceptions far beyond the knowledge of the modern

[1] The original runs thus: "And they runnen togidre a great raudoum; and they frusshen togidre full fiercely, and they breken thare speres so rudely, that the tronchouns flen in sprotes and peces alle about the halle." Mandevile's Travels, p. 285. I have modernized the English in many places, for sometimes it is hardly intelligible.

[2] Ibid.

jugglers. When, says that author, the duke of Anjou and the earl of Savoy were lying with their army before the city of Naples, there was "an enchaunter, a conning man in nigromancy, in the Marches of Naples." This man promised to the duke of Anjou, that he would put him in possession of the castle of Leufe, at that time besieged by him. The duke was desirous of knowing by what means this could be effected; and the magician said, "I shall, by enchauntment, make the ayre so thicke, that they within the castell will think there is a great brydge over the sea, large enough for ten men a-breast to come to them; and when they see this brydge, they will readily yeilde themselves to your mercy, least they should be taken perforce." And may not my men, said the duke, pass over this bridge in reality? To this question the juggler artfully replied, "I dare not, syr, assure you that; for, if any one of the men that passeth on the brydge shall make the sign of the cross upon him, all shall go to noughte, and they that be upon it shall fall into the sea." The earl of Savoy was not present at this conference; but being afterwards made acquainted with it, he said to the duke, "I know well it is the same enchaunter, by whom the queene of Naples and syr Othes of Bresugeth were taken in this castle; for he caused, by his crafte, the sea to seeme so high, that they within were sore abashed, and wend all to have died;[1] but no confidence," continued he, "ought to be placed in a fellow of this kind, who has already betrayed the queen for hire; and now, for the sake of another reward, is willing to give up the man whose bounty he has received." The earl then commanded the enchanter to be brought before him; when he boasted that, by the power of his art, he had caused the castle to be delivered to sir Charles de la Paye, who was then in possession of it; and concluded his speech with these words: "Syr, I am the man of the world that syr Charles reputeth most, and is most in fear of." "By my fayth," replied the earl of Savoy, "ye say well; and I will that syr Charles shall know that he hath great wrong to feare you: but I shall assure hym of you, for ye shal never do more enchauntments to deceyve hym, nor yet any other." So saying, he ordered him to be beheaded; and the sentence was instantly put into execution before the door of the earl's tent. "Thus,"

[1] That is, they were frighted, expecting to be drowned by the rising of the water.

adds our author, "ended the mayster enchantour: and so he was payed hys wages according to his desertes."[1]

VI.—TRICKS OF THE JUGGLERS ASCRIBED TO INFERNAL AGENCY; BUT MORE REASONABLY ACCOUNTED FOR.

Our learned monarch James I. was perfectly convinced that these, and other inferior feats exhibited by the tregetours, could only be performed by the agency of the Devil, "who," says he, "will learne them many juglarie tricks, at cardes and dice, to deceive men's senses thereby, and such innumerable false practiques, which are proved by over-many in this age."[2] It is not, however, very easy to reconcile with common sense the knowledge the king pretended to have had of the intercourse between Satan and his scholars the conjurers; unless his majesty had been, what nobody, I trust, suspects him to have been, one of the fraternity. But, notwithstanding the high authority of a crowned head in favour of Beelzebub, it is the opinion of some modern writers, that the tricks of the jugglers may be accounted for upon much more reasonable, as well as more natural, principles. These artists were greatly encouraged in the middle ages; they travelled in large companies, and carried with them, no doubt, such machinery as was necessary for the performance of their deceptions; and we are all well aware, that very surprising things may be exhibited through the medium of a proper apparatus, and with the assistance of expert confederates. A magic lanthorn will produce appearances almost as wonderful as some of those described by sir John Mandevile, to persons totally ignorant of the existence and nature of such a machine. The principles of natural philosophy were very little known in those dark ages; and, for that reason, the spectators were more readily deceived. In our own times we have had several exhibitions that excited much astonishment; such as an image of wax, suspended by a ribband in the middle of a large room, which answered questions in various languages; an automaton chess-player, that few professors of the game could beat;[3] and men ascending the air without the assistance of

[1] Froissart's Chronicle by lord Berners, vol. iii. chap. 392, fol. 272.

[2] Dæmonologie.

[3] See "The Conjuror Unveiled," a small pamphlet translated from the French; which gives a full account of these curious pieces of mechanism, and of several others equally surprising.

wings: yet these phenomena are considered as puerile, now the secrets upon which their performance depends have been divulged. But, returning to the tregetour, we shall find that he often performed his feats upon a scaffold erected for that purpose; and probably, says a late ingenious writer,[1] received his name from the trebuchet, or trap-door, because he frequently made use of such insidious machines in the displayment of his operations. Chaucer has told us, that Coll the tregetor exhibited upon a table; and other authors speak of "juggling upon the boardes," which clearly indicates the use of a stage or temporary scaffold. Now, let us only add the machinery proper for the occasion, and all the wonders specified in the foregoing passages may be reduced to mere pantomimical deceptions, assisted by slight of hand, and the whole readily accounted for without any reference to supernatural agency

VII.—JOHN RYKELL, A CELEBRATED TREGETOUR.

In the fourteenth century, the tregetours seem to have been in the zenith of their glory; from that period they gradually declined in the popular esteem; their performances were more confined, and of course became less consequential. Lidgate, in one of his poems,[2] introduces Death speaking to a famous tregetour belonging to the court of king Henry V. in this manner

Maister John Rykell, sometime tregitour
Of noble Henry kinge of Englonde,
And of France the mighty conqueror;
For all the sleightes, and turnyng of thyne honde,
Thou must come nere this dance, I understonde;
Nought may avail all thy conclusions,
For Dethe shortly, nother on see nor land,
Is not desceyved by no illusions.[3]

To this summons the sorrowful juggler replies:

[1] Mr. Tyrwhitt, in his excellent edition of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," vol. iii. p. 299.

[2] "The Daunce of Macabre," translated, or rather paraphrased, from the French. In this Dauuce, Death is represented addressing himself to persons of all ranks and ages. John Lydgate was a monk of St. Edmondsbury Abbey. MS. Harl. No. 116.

[3] The meaning is, that Death will come shortly, and not be deceived by any false appearances.

What may availe mankynde naturale ?
Not any crafte schevid [1] by apparance,
Or course of steres above celestial,
Or of heavens all the influence,
Ageynst Deth to stonde at defence.
Lygarde-de-mayne [2] now helpith me right noughte :
Farewell, my craft and all such sapience ;
For Deth hath mo masteries [4] than I have wroughte.

In "The Disobedient Child," an old morality, or interlude, written by Thomas Ingeland in the reign of queen Elizabeth, a servant, describing the sports at his master's wedding, says,

What juggling was there upon the boardes !
What thrusting of knyves through many a nose !
What bearynge of formes ! what holdinge of swordes !
What puttynge of botkyns throughe legge and hose ! [5]

These tricks approximate nearly to those of the modern jugglers, who have knives so constructed, that, when they are applied to the legs, the arms, and other parts of the human figure, they have the appearance of being thrust through them; the bearing of the forms, or seats, I suppose, was the balancing of them; and the holding of swords, the flourishing them about in the sword-dance; which the reader will find described in the succeeding chapter.

VIII.—VARIOUS PERFORMANCES OF THE JOCULATORS.

Originally, as we have before observed, the profession of the joculator included all the arts attributed to the minstrels; and accordingly his performance was called his minstrelsy in the reign of Edward II., and even after he had obtained the appellation of a tregetour.[6] We are well assured, that playing upon the vielle [7] and the harp, and singing of songs, verses, and

[1] Schevid, for achieved, that is to say, performed.

[2] Or any astrological judgment derived from the stars or their influence; for the jugglers usually pretended to be astrologers and soothsayers. See the Essay on Ancient Minstrels, prefixed to the Reliques of Ancient Poetry, by the bishop of Dromore.

[3] Legerdemain; a corrupted word, derived from the French, signifying properly slights of hand, such as are usually performed by the modern jugglers.

[4] More cunning tricks.

[5] Garrick's Collection of Old Plays, K. vol. ii

[6] "Janino le tregettor, facienti ministralsiam suam coram rege," &c.; that is, to Janino the tregetour, for performing his minstrelsy before the king, in his chamber near the priory of Swineshead, twenty shillings. Lib. Comput. Garderobæ, an. 4 Edw. II. fol. 86. MS. Cott. Nero, C. viii.

[7] The same as the modern hurdy-gurdy

poems taken from popular stories;[1] together with dancing, tumbling, and other feats of agility, formed a principal part of the joculator's occupation at the commencement of the thirteenth century; and probably so they might in the days of Chaucer. Another part of the juggler's profession, and which constituted a prominent feature in his character, was teaching bears, apes, monkeys, dogs, and various other animals, to tumble, dance, and counterfeit the actions of men: but we shall have occasion to enlarge upon this subject a few pages farther on.

In a book of customs, says St. Foix,[2] made in the reign of Saint Louis, for the regulation of the duties to be paid upon the little chatelet at the entrance into Paris, we read, that a merchant, who brought apes to sell, should pay four deniers; but, if an ape belonged to a joculator, this man, by causing the animal to dance in the presence of the toll-man, was privileged to pass duty-free, with all the apparatus necessary for his performances: hence came the proverb, "Pay in money; the ape pays in gambols." Another article specifies that the joculator might escape the payment of the toll by singing a couplet of a song before the collector of the duty.

Comenius, I take it, has given us a proper view of the juggler's exhibition, as it was displayed a century and a half back, in a short chapter entitled Prestigiæ, or Sleights.[3] It consists of four divertisements, including the joculator's own performances; and the other three are tumbling and jumping through a hoop; the grotesque dances of the clown, or mimic, who, it is said, appeared with a mark upon his face; and dancing upon the tight rope. The print at the head of his chapter is made agreeably to the English custom, and differs a little from the original description. In the latter it is said, "The juggler sheweth sleights out of a purse." In the print there is no purse represented; but the artist is practising with cups and balls in the

[1] Their performances are thus described by a French poet who wrote in the year 1230:

C'il juggleurs in pies esturent,
S'ont vielles et harpes prisses
Chansons, sons, vers, et reprises,
Et gestes chante nos ont.
Du Cange, in voce *Joculator*.

See also sir John Hawkins's History of Music, vol ii. 4 b.

[2] Essais Hist. sur Paris, vol. ii. p. 39.

[3] "Orbis Sensualium Pictus," by Hoole, 1658; chap. 131

manner they are used at present. The tumbler is walking upon his hands. The rope-dancing is performed by a woman holding a balancing pole; and on the same rope a man, probably "clown to the rope," is represented hanging by one leg with his head downwards. In modern times, the juggler has united songs and puppet-plays to his show.

IX.—PRIVILEGES OF THE JOCULATORS AT PARIS—THE KING'S JOCULATOR.

The joculator regis, or king's juggler, was anciently an officer of note in the royal household; and we find, from Domesday Book, that Berdic, who held that office in the reign of the Conqueror, was a man of property.[1] In the succeeding century, or soon afterwards, the title of rex juglatorum, or king of the jugglers, was conferred upon the chief performer of the company, and the rest, I presume, were under his control. The king's juggler continued to have an establishment in the royal household till the time of Henry VIII.;[2] and in his reign the office and title seem to have been discontinued.

X.—GREAT DISREPUTE OF MODERN JUGGLERS.

The profession of the juggler, with that of the minstrel, had fallen so low in the public estimation at the close of the reign of queen Elizabeth, that the performers were ranked, by the moral writers of the time, not only with "ruffians, blasphemers, thieves, and vagabonds;" but also with "Heretics, Jews, Pagans, and sorcerers;"[3] and, indeed, at an earlier period they were treated with but little more respect, as appears from the following lines in Barclay's Eclogues:

> Jugglers and pipers, bourders and flatterers,
> Baudes and janglers, and cursed adouteres.[4]

In another passage, he speaks of a disguised juggler, and a vile jester or bourder;[5] by the word disguised he refers, per-

[1] "Glowecesterscire. Berdic, joculator regis, habet iij villas, et ibi v car.; nil redd." Extract from Domesday.

[2] Essay on Ancient Minstrels, prefixed to bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. i. p. xciii.

[3] A Treatise against Dicing, Dauncing, vaine Playes, or Enterludes, &c. by John Northbrooke, printed at London in the time of Elizabeth.

[4] Egloge the third, at the end of Brant's "Ship of Fools," by Barclay, printed A.D. 1508.

[5] "Mirrour of Good Manners," translated from the Latin by Barclay, who was a priest and monk of Ely.

haps, to the clown, or mimic; who, as Comenius has just informed us, danced "disguised with a vizard." In more modern times, by way of derision, the juggler was called a hocus-pocus,[1] a term applicable to a pick-pocket, or a common cheat; and his performances were denominated juggelling castes.[2]

[1] Or hokos-pokos, as by Ben Jonson, in "The Staple for Newes." See p. 153. This is the earliest mention I have found of this term. It occurs again in the Seven Champions, by John Kirk, acted in 1663; "My mother could juggle as well as any hocus-pocus in the world."

[2] "Playes confuted," by Stephen Gosson; no date, but written about 1580.

CHAPTER V.

I. Dancing, Tumbling, and Balancing, part of the Joculator's Profession.—II. Performed by Women.—III. Dancing connected with Tumbling.—IV. Antiquity of Tumbling—much encouraged.—V. Various Dances described.—VI. The Gleemen's Dances.—VII. Exemplification of Gleemen's Dances.—VIII. The Sword Dance—IX. Rope-Dancing and wonderful Performances on the Rope.—X. Rope-Dancing from the Battlements of St. Paul's.—XI. Rope-Dancing from St. Paul's Steeple.—XII. Rope-Dancing from All Saints' Church, Hertford.—XIII. A Dutchman's Feats on St. Paul's Weathercock.—XIV. Jacob Hall the Rope-Dancer.—XV. Modern celebrated Rope-Dancing.—XVI. Rope-Dancing at Sadler's Wells.—XVII. Fool's Dance.—XVIII. Morris Dance.—XIX. Egg Dance.—XX. Ladder Dance.—XXI. Jocular Dances.—XXII. Wire-Dancing.—XXIII. Ballette Dances.—XXIV. Leaping and Vaulting.—XXV. Balancing.—XXVI. Remarkable Feats.—XXVII. The Posture-Master's Tricks.—XXVIII. The Mountebank.—XXIX. The Tinker.—XXX. The Fire-Eater.

I.—JOCULATORS' DANCING.

Dancing, tumbling, and balancing, with variety of other exercises requiring skill and agility, were originally included in the performances exhibited by the gleemen and the minstrels; and they remained attached to the profession of the joculator after he was separated from those who only retained the first branches of the minstrel's art, that is to say, poetry and music.

II.—WOMEN DANCERS AND TUMBLERS.

The joculators were sometimes excellent tumblers; yet, generally speaking, I believe that vaulting, tumbling, and balancing, were not executed by the chieftain of the gleeman's company, but by some of his confederates; and very often this part of the show was performed by females, who were called glee-maidens, Maȝen-ȝlÿꝑienȝ, by the Saxons; and tumbling women, tomblesteres, and tombesteres, in Chaucer, derived from the Saxon word ꝛomban, to dance, vault, or tumble. The same poet, in the Romance of the Rose, calls them saylours, or dancers, from the Latin word salio. They are also denominated sauters, from saut in French, to leap. Hence, in Pierce Ploughman, one says, "I can neither saylen ne saute." They are likewise in modern language called balancing women, or tymbesteres, players upon the tymbrel, which they also ba-

lanced occasionally, as we shall find a little farther on. It is almost needless to add, that the ancient usage of introducing females for the performances of these difficult specimens of art and agility, has been successively continued to the present day.

III.—DANCING CONNECTED WITH TUMBLING.

Dancing, in former times, was closely connected with those feats of activity now called vaulting and tumbling; and such exertions often formed part of the dances that were publicly exhibited by the gleemen and the minstrels; for which reason, the Anglo-Saxon writers frequently used the terms of leaping and tumbling for dancing. Both the phrases occur in the Saxon versions of St. Mark's Gospel; where it is said of the daughter of Herodias, that she vaulted or tumbled, instead of danced, before king Herod.[1] In a translation of the seventh century, in the Cotton Library,[2] it says she plægebe, ⁊ gehcabe Denobe; she jumped, or leaped, and pleased Herod. In another Saxon version of the eleventh century, in the Royal Library,[3] she cumbebe, ⁊ hiz heobe Denobe; she tumbled, and it pleased Herod. A third reads, Herodias' daughter cumbobe þæne, tumbled there, &c.[4] These interpretations of the sacred text might easily arise from a misconception of the translators, who, supposing that no common dancing could have attracted the attention of the monarch so potently, or extorted from him the promise of a reward so extensive as that they found stated in the record; therefore referred the performance to some wonderful displayments of activity, resembling those themselves might have seen exhibited by the glee-maidens, on occasions of solemnity, in the courts of Saxon potentates. We may also observe, that the like explication of the passage was not only received in the Saxon versions of the Gospel, but continued in those of much more modern date; and, agreeably to the same idea, many of the illuminators, in depicting this part of the holy history, have represented the damsel in the action of tumbling, or, at least, of walking upon her hands. Mr. Brand, in his edition of Bourne's Vulgar Antiquities, has quoted one in old English that reads thus: "When the daughter of Herodyas was in comyn, and had tomblyde and pleside Harowde." I have before me a MS. of the Harleian Collection,[4] in French, in the thirteenth century,

[1] St. Mark, chap. vi. ver. 22.
[2] Nero, D. iv.
[3] No. 1, A. xiv.
[4] No. 2253. fol. 45.

written by some ecclesiastic, which relates to the church fasts and festivals. Speaking of the death of John Baptist, and finding this tumbling damsel to have been the cause, the pious author treats her with much contempt, as though she had been one of the dancing girls belonging to a company of juggiers, who in his time, it seems, were not considered as paragons of virtue any more than they are in the present day. He says of her, "Bien saveit treschier e tumber;" which may be rendered, "She was well skilled in tumbling and cheating tricks." And accordingly we find the following representation.

53. HERODIAS TUMBLING.

Herodias is so drawn in a book of Prayers in the Royal Library.[1] There is the subjoined representation a century and a half earlier.

54. HERODIAS TUMBLING WITH HER SERVANT.

Her servant stands by her side. The drawing occurs in a series of Scripture histories in the Harleian Collection,[2] written and illuminated at the commencement of the thirteenth century,

[1] No. 2, B. vii. [2] No. 1527

IV.—ANTIQUITY OF TUMBLING.

The exhibition of dancing, connected with leaping and tumbling, for the entertainment of princes and noblemen on occasions of festivity, is of high antiquity. Homer mentions two dancing tumblers, who stood upon their heads,[1] and moved about to the measure of a song, for the diversion of Menelaüs and his courtiers, at the celebration of his daughter's nuptials. It seems that the astonishment excited by the difficulty of such performances, obviated the absurdity, and rendered them agreeable to persons of rank and affluence. The Saxon princes encouraged the dancers and tumblers; and the courts of the Norman monarchs were crowded with them: we have, indeed, but few of their exertions particularised; for the monks, through whose medium the histories of the middle ages have generally been conveyed to us, were their professed enemies: it is certain, however, notwithstanding the censure promulgated in their disfavour, that they stood their ground, and were not only well received, but even retained, in the houses of the opulent. No doubt, they were then, as in the present day, an immoral and dissolute set of beings, who, to promote merriment, frequently descended to the lowest kinds of buffoonery. We read, for instance, of a tumbler in the reign of Edward II. who rode before his majesty, and frequently fell from his horse in such a manner, that the king was highly diverted, and laughed exceedingly,[2] and rewarded the performer with the sum of twenty shillings, which at that period was a very considerable donation. A like reward of twenty shillings was given, by order of Henry VIII., to a strange tumbler, that is, I suppose, an itinerant who had no particular establishment; a like sum to a tumbler who performed before him at lord Bath's; and a similar reward to the "tabouretts and a tumbler," probably of the household.[3] It should seem that these artists were really famous mirth-makers; for, one of them had the address to excite the merriment of that solemn bigot queen Mary. "After her majesty," observes Strype, "had reviewed the royal pensioners in Greenwich Park, there came a tumbler, and played many pretty feats, the queen and cardinal Pole looking on; whereat she was observed to laugh heartily."[4]

[1] Odyssey, lib. iv. lin. 18. The original word is κυβις ητηρε, saltatores qui ee in capita dejiciunt.

[2] "De queux le roi rya grantement." Roll of Expenses in the reign of king Edward II. in the possession of Thomas Astle, esq.

[3] From a MS. in the Remembrancer's Office, an. 13 Hen. VIII.

[4] Eccles. Mem. vol. iii. p. 312, cap. 39.

V.—VARIOUS DANCES.

Among the pastimes exhibited for the amusement of queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth castle, there were shown, as Laneham says, before her highness, surprising feats of agility, by an Italian, "in goings, turnings, tumblings, castings, hops, jumps, leaps, skips, springs, gambauds, somersaults, caprettings, and flights, forward, backward, sideways, downward, upward, and with sundry windings, gyrings, and circumflections," which he performed with so much ease and lightness, that words are not adequate to the description; "insomuch that I," says Laneham, "began to doubt whether he was a man or a spirit;" and afterwards, "As for this fellow, I cannot tell what to make of him; save that I may guess his back to be metalled like a lamprey, that has no bone, but a line like a lute-string."[1] So lately as the reign of queen Anne, this species of performance continued to be fashionable; and in one of the Tatlers we meet with the following passage: "I went on Friday last to the Opera; and was surprised to find a thin house at so noble an entertainment, 'till I heard that the tumbler was not to make his appearance that night."[2]

Three ancient specimens of the tumbler's art are subjoined

55. TUMBLING.—XIII. CENTURY.

This engraving represents a woman bending herself backwards, from a MS. of the thirteenth century, in the Cotton Library.[3]

[1] Laneham's Letter, in Mr. Nichols's Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, pp. 16, 17.
[2] No. 115, dated Jan. 3, 1709.
[3] Domitian, A. 2.

56. TUMBLING.—XIV. CENTURY.

In this second representation a man is performing the same feat, but in a more extraordinary manner. The original is contained in a MS. in the library of sir Hans Sloane.[1]

57. TUMBLING.—XIV. CENTURY

This representation of a girl turning over upon her hands, is from a MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.[2] Both these MSS. are of the fourteenth century. Feats of activity by tumblers were then, as at present, enlivened with music.

[1] No. 335. [2] No. 264.

VI.—THE GLEEMEN'S DANCES.

It is not by any means my intention to insinuate, from what has been said in the foregoing pages, that there were no dances performed by the Saxon gleemen and their assistants, but such as consisted of vaulting and tumbling: on the contrary, I trust it may be proved, that their dances were varied and accommodated to the taste of those for whom the performance was appropriated; being calculated, as occasion required, to excite the admiration and procure the applause of the wealthy or the vulgar.

VII.—EXEMPLIFICATION OF GLEEMEN'S DANCES.

We have already noticed a dance, represented by the engraving No. 50, from a painting of the tenth century, the most ancient of the kind that I have met with.[1] The crouching attitudes of the two dancers, point out great difficulty in the part they are performing, but do not convey the least indication of vaulting or tumbling. Attitudes somewhat similar I have seen occur in some of the steps of a modern hornpipe.

58. GLEEMEN'S DANCE.—IX. CENTURY.

Here, also, we find a young man dancing singly to the music of two flutes and a lyre; and the action attempted to be expressed by the artist is rather that of ease and elegancy of motion, than of leaping, or contorting of the body in a violent manner. It is evident that this delineation, which is from a Latin and Saxon MS. of the ninth century, in the Cotton Library,[2] was

[1] On p. 173.

[2] Cleopatra, C. viii.

intended for the representation of part of the gleeman's exhibition; for the designer has crowded into the margin a number of heads and parts of figures, necessarily incomplete from want of room, who appear as spectators; but these are much confused, and in some places obliterated, so that they could not have been copied with any tolerable effect. The dance represented by the engraving No. 51, from a MS. of the ninth century,[1] in which the musician bears a part, I take to be of the burlesque kind, and intended to excite laughter by the absurdity of the gestures practised by the performers; but that in the following engraving, from a MS. of the fourteenth century, in the Royal Library,[2] has more appearance of elegance.

59. Dancing to a Bear.

This dance is executed by a female; and probably the perfection of the dance consisted in approaching and receding from the bear with great agility, so as to prevent his seizing upon her, and occasioning any interruption to the performance, which the animal, on the other hand, appears to be exceedingly desirous of effecting, being unmuzzled for the purpose, and irritated by the scourge of the juggler.

VIII.—THE SWORD-DANCE.

There is a dance which was probably in great repute among the Anglo-Saxons, because it was derived from their ancestors the ancient Germans; it is called the sword-dance; and the performance is thus described by Tacitus:[3] "One public diversion was constantly exhibited at all their meetings; young men, who, by frequent exercise, have attained to great per-

[1] On p. 176. [2] No. 2, B. viii. [3] Tacit. de Morib. Germ. cap. 24.

fection in that pastime, strip themselves, and dance among the points of swords and spears with most wonderful agility, and even with the most elegant and graceful motions. They do not perform this dance for hire, but for the entertainment of the spectators, esteeming their applause a sufficient reward."[1] This dance continues to be practised in the northern parts of England about Christmas time, when, says Mr. Brand, "the fool-plough goes about; a pageant that consists of a number of sword-dancers dragging a plough, with music." The writer then tells us that he had seen this dance performed very frequently, with little or no variation from the ancient method, excepting only that the dancers of the present day, when they have formed their swords into a figure, lay them upon the ground, and dance round them.

I have not been fortunate enough to meet with any delineation that accords with the foregoing descriptions of the sword-dance; but in a Latin manuscript of Prudentius with Saxon notes, written in the ninth century, and now in the Cotton Library,[2] a military dance of a different kind occurs. It is exceedingly curious, and has not, that I recollect, been mentioned by any of our writers. The drawing is copied below.

60. SWORD-DANCE

[1] The reader may find a more particular account of the various motions and figures formed by the dancers, from Olaüs Magnus, in Mr. Brand's notes upon the 24th chapter of Bourne's Vulgar Antiquities, p. 175.

[2] Cleopatra. C. viii.

This drawing represents two men, equipped in martial habits, and each of them armed with a sword and a shield, engaged in a combat; the performance is enlivened by the sound of a horn; the musician acts in a double capacity, and is, together with a female assistant, dancing round them to the cadence of the music; and probably the actions of the combatants were also regulated by the same measure.

Early in the last century, and, I doubt not, long before that period, a species of sword-dance, usually performed by young women, constituted a part of the juggler's exhibition at Bartholomew fair. I have before me two bills of the shows there presented some time in the reign of queen Anne. The one speaks of "dancing with several naked swords, performed by a child of eight years of age;" which, the showman assures us, had given "satisfaction to all persons." The other, put forth, it seems, by one who belonged to Sadler's Wells, promises the company, that they shall see "a young woman dance with the swords, and upon a ladder, surpassing all her sex." Both these bills were printed in the reign of queen Anne; the first belonged to a showman named Crawley;[1] and the second to James Miles, from Sadler's Wells, who calls his theatre a music booth, and the exhibition consisted chiefly of dancing. The originals are in the Harleian Library.[2] About thirty years back,[3] I remember to have seen at Flockton's, a much noted but very clumsy juggler, a girl about eighteen or twenty years of age, who came upon the stage with four naked swords, two in each hand; when the music played, she turned round with great swiftness, and formed a great variety of figures with the swords, holding them over her head, down by her sides, behind her, and occasionally she thrust them in her bosom. The dance generally continued about ten or twelve minutes; and, when it was finished, she stopped suddenly, without appearing to be in the least giddy from the constant reiteration of the same motion.

IX.—THE ROPE-DANCE.

This species of amusement is certainly very ancient. Terence, in the prologue to Hecyra, complains that the attention of the public was drawn from his play, by the exhibitions of a rope-dancer:

> Ita populus studio stupidus in funambulo
> Animum occupârat.

[1] See p. 166. [2] No 5931. [3] [Before 1800.]

We are well assured, that dancing upon the rope constituted a part of the entertainment presented to the public by the minstrels and joculators; and we can trace it as far back as the thirteenth century: but whether the dancers at that time exhibited upon the slack or tight rope, or upon both, cannot easily be ascertained; and we are equally in the dark respecting the extent of their abilities: but, if we may judge from the existing specimens of other feats of agility performed by them or their companions, we may fairly conclude that they were by no means contemptible artists.

When Isabel of Bavaria, queen to Charles VI. of France, made her public entry into Paris, among other extraordinary exhibitions prepared for her reception was the following, recorded by Froissart, who was himself a witness to the fact: "There was a mayster[1] came out of Geane; he had tied a corde upon the hyghest house on the brydge of Saynt Michell over all the houses, and the other ende was tyed to the hyghest tower of our Ladye's churche; and, as the quene passed by, and was in the great streat called Our Ladye's strete; bycause it was late, this sayd mayster, wyth two brinnynge[2] candelles in hys handes, issued out of a littel stage that he had made on the heyght of our Lady's tower, synginge[3] as he went upon the cord all alonge the great strete, so that all that sawe him hadde marvayle how it might be; and he bore still in hys handes the two brinnynge candelles, so that he myght be well sene all over Parys, and two myles without the city. He was such a tombler, that his lightnesse was greatly praised." In the French, "Molt fist d'appertices tant que la legierete de lui, et toutes ses œuvres furent molt prisées;" "He gave them many proofs of his skill, so that his agility and all his performances were highly esteemed." The manner in which this extraordinary feat was carried into execution is not so clear as might be wished. The translation justifies the idea of his walking down the rope; but the words of Froissart are, "S'asbit sur cel corde, et il vint tout au long de la rue;" that is, literally, he seated himself upon the cord, and he came all along the street; which indicates his sliding down, and then the trick will bear a close resemblance to those that follow. But St. Foix, on the authority of

[1] I have followed the old English translation by lord Berners. The French is "maistre engigneur," which may be rendered "master juggler." Vol. iv. chap. 38. fol. 47.

[2] Burning or lighted candles, in the French chierges ardans.

[3] Singing.

another historian, says, he descended dancing upon the cord; and, passing between the curtains of blue taffety, ornamented with large fleurs-de-lis of gold, which covered the bridge, he placed a crown upon the head of Isabel, and then remounted upon the cord.[1]

X.—ROPE-DANCING FROM THE BATTLEMENTS OF ST. PAUL'S.

A performance much resembling the foregoing was exhibited before king Edward VI. at the time he passed in procession through the city of London, on Friday, the nineteenth of February, 1546, previous to his coronation. "When the king," says the author, "was advanced almost to St. George's church,[2] in Paul's church-yard, there was a rope as great as the cable of a ship, stretched in length from the battlements of Paul's steeple, with a great anchor at one end, fastened a little before the dean of Paul's house-gate; and, when his majesty approached near the same, there came a man, a stranger, being a native of Arragon, lying on the rope with his head forward, casting his arms and legs abroad, running on his breast on the rope from the battlements to the ground, as if it had been an arrow out of a bow, and stayed on the ground. Then he came to his majesty, and kissed his foot; and so, after certain words to his highness, he departed from him again, and went upwards upon the rope till he came over the midst of the church-yard; where he, having a rope about him, played certain mysteries on the rope, as tumbling, and casting one leg from another. Then took he the rope, and tied it to the cable, and tied himself by the right leg a little space beneath the wrist of the foot, and hung by one leg a certain space, and after recovered himself again with the said rope and unknit the knot, and came down again. Which stayed his majesty, with all the train, a good space of time."[3]

XI.—ROPE-DANCING FROM ST. PAUL'S STEEPLE.

This trick was repeated, though probably by another performer, in the reign of queen Mary; for, according to Holinshed, among the various shows prepared for the reception of Philip king of Spain, was one of a man who "came downe upon a rope, tied to the battlement of Saint Paule's church, with his

[1] Essais sur Paris, vol. ii. p. 42.

[2] It should be St. Gregory's church, which stood on the south side of St. Paul's nearly opposite to the Dean's Gateway.

[3] Archæologia, vol. vii.

head before, neither staieing himself with hand or foot; which," adds the author, "shortlie after cost him his life."[1]

XII.—ROPE-DANCING FROM ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, HERTFORD.

A similar exploit was put in practice, about fifty years back,[2] in different parts of this kingdom; I received the following account of the manner in which it was carried into execution at Hertford from a friend of mine,[3] who assisted the exhibitor in adjusting his apparatus, and saw his performance several times: A rope was stretched from the top of the tower of All Saints' church, and brought obliquely to the ground about fourscore yards from the bottom of the tower, where, being drawn over two strong pieces of wood nailed across each other, it was made fast to a stake driven into the earth; two or three feather beds were then placed upon the cross timbers, to receive the performer when he descended, and to break his fall. He was also provided with a flat board having a groove in the midst of it, which he attached to his breast; and when he intended to exhibit, he laid himself upon the top of the rope, with his head downwards, and adjusted the groove to the rope, his legs being held by a person appointed for that purpose, until such time as he had properly balanced himself. He was then liberated, and descended with incredible swiftness from the top of the tower to the feather-beds, which prevented his reaching the ground. This man had lost one of his legs, and its place was supplied by a wooden leg, which was furnished on this occasion with a quantity of lead sufficient to counterpoise the weight of the other. He performed this three times in the same day; the first time, he descended without holding any thing in his hands; the second time, he blew a trumpet; and the third, he held a pistol in each hand, which he discharged as he came down.

XIII.—A DUTCHMAN'S FEATS ON ST. PAUL'S WEATHERCOCK.

To the foregoing extraordinary exhibitions we may add another equally dangerous, but executed without the assistance of a rope. It was performed in the presence of queen Mary in her passage through London to Westminster, the day before her coronation, in 1553, and is thus described by Holinshed:[4]

[1] Holinshed, Chron. vol. iii. p. 1121.
[2] [Before 1800.]
[3] Mr. John Carrington, of Bacon's, in the parish of Bramfield, near Hertford.
[4] Holinshed, Chron. vol iii. p. 1091.

"When she came to Saint Paule's church-yard against the school, master Heywood sat in a pageant under a vine, and made to her an oration in Latin; and then there was one Peter, a Dutchman, that stoode upon the weathercocke of Saint Paul's steeple, holding a streamer in his hands of five yards long, and waving thereof. He sometimes stood on one foot, and shook the other, and then he kneeled on his knees, to the great marvell of all the people. He had made two scaffolds under him; one above the cross, having torches and streamers set upon it, and another over the ball of the cross, likewise set with streamers and torches, which could not burn, the wind was so great." The historian informs us, that "Peter had sixteene pounds, thirteene shillings, and foure pence, given to him by the citie for his costs and paines, and for all his stuffe."

XIV.—JACOB HALL THE ROPE-DANCER.

In the reign of Charles II. there was a famous rope-dancer named Jacob Hall, whose portrait is still in existence.[1] The open-hearted duchess of Cleveland is said to have been so partial to this man, that he rivalled the king himself in her affections, and received a salary from her grace.

XV.—MODERN CELEBRATED ROPE-DANCING.

Soon after the accession of James II. to the throne, a Dutch woman made her appearance in this country; and "when," says a modern author, "she first danced and vaulted upon the rope in London, the spectators beheld her with a pleasure mixed with pain, as she seemed every moment in danger of breaking her neck." This woman was afterwards exceeded by Signora Violante, who not only exhibited many feats which required more strength and agility of body than she was mistress of, but had also a stronger head, as she performed at a much greater distance from the ground than any of her predecessors. Signor Violante was no less excellent as a rope-dancer. The spectators were astonished, in the reign of George II., at seeing the famous Turk dance upon the rope, balance himself on a slack wire without a poise, and toss up oranges alternately with his hands: but this admiration was considerably abated when one of the oranges happened to fall, and appeared by the sound to be a

[1] Granger, Biog. Hist. vol. iv. p. 349.

ball of painted lead. Signor and Signora Spinacuta were not inferior to the Turk. "The former danced on the rope (in 1768) at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, with two boys tied to his feet. But what is still more extraordinary, a monkey has lately performed there, both as a rope-dancer and an equilibrist, such tricks as no man was thought equal to before the Turk appeared in England."[1]

ROPE-DANCING AT SADLER'S WELLS, &c.

During the last century, Sadler's Wells was a famous nursery for tumblers, balance-masters, and dancers upon the rope and upon the wire. These exhibitions have of late years lost much of their popularity: the tight-rope dancing, indeed, is still continued there[2] by Richer, a justly celebrated performer. This man certainly displays more ease and elegance of action, and much greater agility, upon the rope, than any other dancer that I ever saw: his exertions at all times excite the astonishment, while they command the applause of the spectators.

I shall only observe, that the earliest representation of rope-dancing which I have met with occurs in a little print affixed to one of the chapters of the vocabulary of Commenius, translated by Hoole;[3] where a woman is depicted dancing upon the tight-rope, and holding a balance charged with lead at both ends, according to the common usage of the present day;[4] and behind her we see a man, with his hand downwards, and hanging upon the same rope by one of his legs. This feat, with others of a similar kind, are more usually performed upon the slack rope, which at the same time is put into motion; the performer frequently hanging by one foot, or by both his hands, or in a variety of different manners and attitudes; or by laying himself along upon the rope, holding it with his hands and feet, the latter being crossed, and turning round with incredible swiftness, which is called roasting the pig.

XVII.—FOOL'S DANCE.

The fool's dance, or a dance performed by persons equipped in the dresses appropriated to the fools, is very ancient, and

[1] Granger, vol. iv. pp. 352, 353.

[2] [In 1801.]

[3] Orbis Sensualium Pictus, A. D. 1658.

[4] Richer dances with great facility without any balance, and walks down the rope into the pit, and ascends again. He also adds a variety of other performances.

originally, I apprehend, formed a part of the pageant belonging to the festival of fools. This festival was a religious mummery, usually held at Christmas time; and consisted of various ceremonials and mockeries, not only exceedingly ridiculous, but shameful and impious.[1] A vestige of the fool's dance, preserved in a MS. in the Bodleian Library,[2] written and illuminated in the reign of king Edward III. and completed in 1344, is copied below.

61. A Fool's Dance.—XIV. Century.

In this representation of the dance, it seems conducted with some degree of regularity; and is assisted by the music of the regals and the bagpipes.[3] The dress of the musicians resembles that of the dancers, and corresponds exactly with the habit of the court fool at that period.[4] I make no doubt, the morris-dance, which afterwards became exceedingly popular in this

[1] An account of this festival may be found in the account of Christmas Games, book iv. chap. iii. sect. 9

[2] No. 964.

[3] [In the drawing the musicians face the dancers: they are placed below them in the above engraving to suit the present page.]

[4] [Mr. Douce is of opinion, that the dance set forth above by Mr. Strutt, from the Bodleian MS., did not form a part of the festival of fools.]

country, originated from the fool's dance; and thence we trace the bells which characterised the morris-dancers. The word morris applied to the dance is usually derived from Morisco, which in the Spanish language signifies a Moor, as if the dance had been taken from the Moors; but I cannot help considering this as a mistake, for it appears to me that the Morisco or Moor dance is exceedingly different from the morris-dance formerly practised in this country; it being performed by the castanets, or rattles, at the end of the fingers, and not with bells attached to various parts of the dress. In a comedy called Variety, printed in 1649, we meet with this passage: "like a Bacchanalian, dancing the Spanish Morisco, with knackers at his fingers." This dance was usually, I believe, performed by a single person, which by no means agrees with the morris-dance. Sir John Hawkins [1] observes that, within the memory of persons living, a saraband danced by a Moor constantly formed part of the entertainment at a puppet-show; and this dance was always performed with the castanets. I shall not pretend to investigate the derivation of the word morris; though probably it might be found at home: it seems, however, to have been applied to the dance in modern times, and, I trust, long after the festival to which it originally belonged was done away and had nearly sunk into oblivion.

XVIII.—MORRIS-DANCE.

The morris-dance was sometimes performed by itself, but was much more frequently joined to processions and pageants, and especially to those appropriated for the celebration of the May-games. On these occasions, the Hobby-horse, or a Dragon, with Robin Hood, the maid Marian, and other characters, supposed to have been the companions of that famous outlaw, made a part of the dance. In latter times, the morris was frequently introduced upon the stage. Stephen Gosson, who wrote about 1579, in a little tract entitled Playes Confuted, speaks of "dauncing of gigges, galiardes, and morisces, with hobbi-horses," as stage performances.

The garments of the morris-dancers, as we observed before, were adorned with bells, which were not placed there merely for the sake of ornament, but were to be sounded as they danced. These bells were of unequal sizes, and differently

[1] History of Music, vol. iv. p. 388.

denominated, as the fore bell, the second bell, the treble, the tenor or great bell, and mention is also made of double bells. In the third year of queen Elizabeth, two dozen of morris-bells were estimated at one shilling.[1] The principal dancer in the morris was more superbly habited than his companions, as appears from a passage in an old play, The Blind Beggar of Bednal Green, by John Day, 1659, wherein it is said of one of the characters, "He wants no cloths, for he hath a cloak laid on with gold lace, and an embroidered jerkin; and thus he is marching hither like the foreman of a morris."

I do not find that the morris-dancers were confined to any particular number: in the ancient representation of this dance given by the engraving No. 61, there are five, exclusive of the two musicians. A modern writer speaks of a set of morris-dancers who went about the country, consisting of ten men who danced, besides the maid Marian, and one who played upon the pipe and tabor.[2]

The hobby-horse, which seems latterly to have been almost inseparable from the morris-dance, was a compound figure; the resemblance of the head and tail of a horse, with a light wooden frame for the body, was attached to the person who was to perform the double character, covered with trappings reaching to the ground, so as to conceal the feet of the actor, and prevent its being seen that the supposed horse had none. Thus equipped, he was to prance about, imitating the curvetings and motions of a horse, as we may gather from the following speech in an old tragedy called the Vow-breaker, or Fair Maid of Clifton, by William Sampson, 1636. "Have I not practised my reines, my carreeres, my prankers, my ambles, my false trotts, my smooth ambles, and Canterbury paces—and shall the mayor put me, besides, the hobby-horse? I have borrowed the fore-horse bells, his plumes, and braveries; nay, I have had the mane new shorn and frizelled.—Am I not going to buy ribbons and toys of sweet Ursula for the Marian—and shall I not play the hobby-horse? Provide thou the dragon, and let me alone for the hobby-horse." And afterwards: "Alas, Sir! I come only to borrow a few ribbandes, bracelets, ear-rings, wyertyers, and silk girdles, and handkerchers, for a morris and a show before the queen—I come to furnish the hobby-horse."

[1] Archæologia, vol. i. p. 15. See also the Witch of Edmonton, a tragi-comedy, by William Rowley, printed in 1658.

[2] See Johnson's Dictionary, word *Morris-dance*.

XIX.—THE EGG-DANCE.

I am not able to ascertain the antiquity of this dance. The indication of such a performance occurs in an old comedy, entitled The longer thou livest, the more Foole thou art, by William Wager,[1] in the reign of queen Elizabeth, where we meet with these lines:

> Upon my one foote pretely I can hoppe,
> And daunce it trimley about an egge.

Dancing upon one foot was exhibited by the Saxon gleemen, and probably by the Norman minstrels, but more especially by the women-dancers, who might thence acquire the name of hoppesteres, which is given by Chaucer. A vestige of this denomination is still retained, and applied to dancing, though somewhat contemptuously; for an inferior dancing-meeting is generally called a hop. A representation of the [illegible] on one foot, taken from a manuscript of the tenth century, appears by the engraving No. 52,[2] where the gleeman is performing to the sound of the harp.

Hopping matches for prizes were occasionally made in the sixteenth century, as we learn from John Heywoode the epigrammatist. In his Proverbs, printed in 1566, are the following lines:

> Where wooers hoppe in and out, long time may bring
> Him that hoppeth best at last to have the ring—
> —I hoppyng without for a ringe of a rushe.

And again, in the Four P's, a play by the same author, one of the characters is directed "to hop upon one foot;" and another says,

> Here were a hopper to hop for the ring.

Hence it appears a ring was usually the prize, and given to him who could hop best, and continue to do so the longest.

But to return to the egg-dance. This performance was common enough about thirty years back,[3] and was well received at Sadler's Wells; where I saw it exhibited, not by simply hopping round a single egg, but in a manner that much increased the difficulty. A number of eggs, I do not precisely recollect how many, but I believe about twelve or fourteen, were placed at certain distances marked upon the stage; the dancer, taking his stand, was blind-folded, and a hornpipe being played in the orchestra, he went through all the paces

[1] Garrick's Collection of Old Plays, 1 vol. 18mo. [2] See p. 176.
[3] [Reckoning from 1801.]

and figures of the dance, passing backwards and forwards between the eggs without touching one of them.

XX.—THE LADDER-DANCE.

So called, because the performer stands upon a ladder, which he shifts from place to place, and ascends or descends without losing the equilibrium, or permitting it to fall. This dance was practised at Sadler's Wells at the commencement of the last century, and revived about thirty years back. It is still continued there[1] by Dubois, who calls himself the clown of the Wells, and is a very useful actor, as well as an excellent performer upon the tight-rope. In the reign of queen Anne, James Miles, who declared himself to be a performer from Sadler's Wells, kept a music-booth in Bartholomew Fair, where he exhibited nineteen different kinds of dances; among them were a wrestler's dance, vaulting upon the slack rope, and dancing upon the ladder; the latter, he tells us, as well as the sword-dance, was performed by "a young woman surpassing all her sex."[2] —An Inventory of Playhouse Furniture, quoted in the Tatler[3] under the article, Materials for Dancing, specifies masques, castanets, and a ladder of ten rounds. I apprehend the ladder-dance originated from the ancient pastime of walking or dancing upon very high stilts. A specimen of such an exhibition is here given from a MS. roll in the Royal Library, written and illuminated in the reign of Henry III.[4] The actor is exercising a double function, that is, of a musician, and of a dancer.

62. Stilt Dancing.—XIII. Century.

[1] [In 1801.] [2] Harl. Lib. 5931. [3] Vol. i. No. 42. [4] 14, B. v

XXI.—JOCULAR DANCES.

In the Roman de la Rose, we read of a dance, the name of which is not recorded, performed by two young women lightly clothed. The original reads, "Qui estoient en pure cottes, et tresses a menu tresse;" which Chaucer renders, "In kyrtels, and none other wede, and fayre ytressed every tresse." The French intimates that their hair was platted, or braided in small braids. The thin clothing, I suppose, was used then, as it is now upon like occasions, to show their persons to greater advantage. In their dancing they displayed a variety of singular attitudes; the one coming as it were privately to the other, and, when they were near together, in a playsome manner they turned their faces about, so that they seemed continually to kiss each other

> ———They threw yfere
> Ther mouthes, so that, through ther play,
> It semed as they kyste alway.—*Chaucer's translation.*

A dance, the merit of which, if I mistake not, consisted in the agility and adroitness of the performer, has been noticed already, and is represented by the engraving No. 51;[1] and likewise in No. 59,[2] where a woman is dancing, and eluding the pursuit of a bear made angry by the scourge of his master. The various situations of the actress and the disappointment of the animal excited, no doubt, the mirth as well as the applause of the spectators.

Many of the ancient dances were of a jocular kind, and sometimes executed by one person: we have, for instance, an account of a man who danced upon a table before king Edward II. The particulars of the dance are not specified; but it is said, that his majesty laughed very heartily at the performance: "Et lui fist tres grandement rire."[3] It probably consisted of quaint attitudes and ridiculous gesticulations. The king, however, was so delighted, that he gave a reward of fifty shillings to the dancer, which was a great sum in those days. A few years ago,[4] there was a fellow that used to frequent the different public-houses in the metropolis, who, mounting a table, would stand upon his head with his feet towards the ceiling, and make all the different steps of a hornpipe upon it for the diversion of the company. His method of performing was to place a

[1] On p. 176. [2] On p. 214.
[3] Rot. Comput. temp. Edw. II. penès T. Astle, esq. [4] [Before 1801.]

porter-pot upon the table, raised high enough for his feet to touch the ceiling, when his head was upon the pot. I have been told that many publicans would not permit him to come into their houses, because he had damaged their ceiling, and in some places danced part of it down. An exhibition nearly as ridiculous is here represented from a MS. in the Royal Library.

63. Remarkable Dance.—XIII. Century

Here we perceive a girl dancing upon the shoulders of the joculator, who at the same time is playing upon the bagpipes and appears to be in the action of walking forwards.

XXII.—WIRE-DANCING.

Wire-dancing, at least so much of it as I have seen exhibited, appears to me to be misnamed: it consists rather of various feats of balancing, the actor sitting, standing, lying, or walking, upon the wire, which at the same time is usually swung backwards and forwards; and this, I am told, is a mere trick, to give the greater air of difficulty to the performance. Instead of dancing, I would call it balancing upon the wire.

XXIII.—BALLETTE-DANCES.

The grand figure-dances, and ballettes of action, as they are called, of the modern times, most probably surpass in splendour the ancient exhibitions of dancing. They first appeared, I believe, at the Opera-house; but have since been adopted by the two royal theatres, and imitated with less splendour upon the

[1] 14. E. iii.

summer stages. These spectacles are too extensive by far in their operations, and too multifarious to be described in a general work like this: suffice it to say, they are pantomimical representations of historical and poetical subjects, expressed by fantastical gestures, aided by superb dresses, elegant music, and beautiful scenery; and sorry am I to add, they have nearly eclipsed the sober portraitures of real nature, and superseded in the public estimation the less attractive lessons of good sense.

XXIV.—LEAPING AND VAULTING.

There are certain feats of tumbling and vaulting that have no connexion with dancing, such as leaping and turning with the heels over the head in the air, termed the somersault, corruptly called a somerset. Mrs. Piozzi, speaking of Robert Carr, earl of Somerset, and favourite of James I., says, "and the sommerset, still used by tumblers, taken from him."[1] The word, however, was in use, and applied by the tumblers to the feat above mentioned, before the birth of Carr. There was also the feat of turning round with great rapidity, alternately bearing upon the hands and feet, denominated the fly-flap. In a satirical pamphlet, entitled The Character of a Quack Doctor, published at London, 1676, the empiric, boasting of his cures, says, "The Sultan Gilgal, being violently afflicted with a spasmus, came six hundred leagues to meet me in a go-cart: I gave him so speedy an acquittance from his dolor, that the next night he danced a saraband with fly-flaps and somersets," &c.: but this is evidently conjoining the three for the sake of ridicule. The performance of leaping through barrels without heads, and through hoops, especially the latter, is an exploit of long standing: we find it represented in the annexed engraving from a drawing in an ancient manuscript.

64. A Feat in the XIV. Century.

[1] Retrospection of Eighteen Hundred Years, vol. ii. p. 224.

Two boys are depicted holding the hoop, and the third preparing to leap through it, having deposited his cloak upon the ground to receive him.

William Stokes, a vaulting master of the seventeenth century, boasted, in a publication called The Vaulting Master, &c. printed at Oxford in 1652, that he had reduced "vaulting to a method." In his book are several plates containing different specimens of his practice, which consisted chiefly in leaping over one or more horses, or upon them, sometimes seating himself in the saddle and sometimes standing upon the same. All these feats are now[1] performed at Astley's, and at the circus in St. George's Fields, with many additional acquirements; and the horses gallop round the ride while the actor is going through his manœuvres: on the contrary, the horses belonging to our vaulter remained at rest during the whole time of his exhibition.

A show-bill for Bartholomew Fair, during the reign of queen Anne[2] announces "the wonderful performances of that most celebrated master Simpson, the famous vaulter, who, being lately arrived from Italy, will show the world what vaulting is!" The bill speaks pompously: how far his abilities coincided with the promise, I cannot determine, for none of his exertions are specified. But the most extraordinary vaulter that has appeared within my memory was brought forward in 1799, at the Circus. He was a native of Yorkshire, named Ireland, then about eighteen years of age, exceedingly well made, and upwards of six feet high. He leaped over nine horses standing side by side and a man seated upon the mid-horse; he jumped over a garter held fourteen feet high; and at another jump kicked a bladder hanging sixteen feet at least from the ground; and, for his own benefit, he leaped over a temporary machine representing a broad-wheeled waggon with the tilt. These astonishing specimens of strength and agility were performed, without any trick or deception, by a fair jump, and not with the somersault, which is usually practised on such occasions. After a run of ten or twelve yards, he ascended an inclined plane, constructed with thick boards, and about three feet in height at one end; from the upper part of this plane he made his spring, and having performed the leap, was received into a carpet held by six or eight men. I examined this apparatus

[1] [In 1801.]

[2] In a volume of Miscellaneous Papers, Bibl. Harl. 5931.

very minutely, and am well persuaded that he received no assistance from any elasticity in the boards, they being too thick to afford him any, and especially at the top, where they were made fast to the frame that supported them; nor from any other kind of artificial spring. It may readily be supposed that exertions of such an extraordinary nature could not be long continued without some disastrous accident; and accordingly, in the first season of his engagement, he sprained the tendon of his heel so violently, that he could not perform for nearly two years afterwards.

XXV.—BALANCING.

Under this head perhaps may be included several of the performances mentioned in the preceding pages, and especially the throwing of three balls and three knives alternately into the air, and catching them as they fall, as represented by the engraving No 50, from a MS. of the eighth century. This trick, in my memory, commonly constituted a part of the puppet-showman's exhibition; but I do not recollect to have seen it extended beyond four articles; for instance, two oranges and two forks; and the performer, by way of conclusion, caught the oranges upon the forks.

In the Romance of the Rose, we read of tymbesteres, or balance-mistresses, who, according to the description there given, played upon the tymbres, or timbrels, and occasionally tossing them into the air, caught them again upon one finger. The passage translated by Chaucer, stands thus:

> There was manye a tymbestere—
> —Couthe her crafte full parfytly:
> The tymbres up full subtelly
> They cast, and hent full ofte
> Upon a fynger fayre and softe,
> That they fayled never mo.[1]

Towards the close of last summer (1799) I saw three itinerant musicians parading the streets of London; one of them turned the winch of an organ which he carried at his back, another

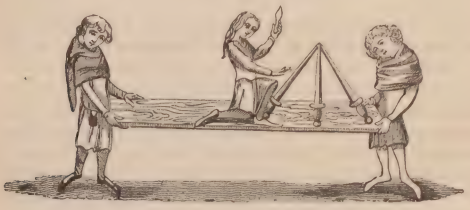
[1] In the original French it is said,

> "——et timberesses,
> Qui moult savoient bien juer,
> Qui ne finoient de ruer
> Le timbre en haut, si recueilloient
> Sus un doi conques enfailloient."

blew a reed-pipe, and the third played on a tambourine; the latter imitated the timbesters above mentioned, and frequently during the performance of a tune cast up the instrument into the air three or four feet higher than his head, and caught it, as it returned, upon a single finger; he then whirled it round with an air of triumph, and proceeded in the accompaniment without losing time, or occasioning the least interruption.

XXVI.—REMARKABLE FEATS OF BALANCING.

Subjoined are a few specimens of the ancient balance-master's art.



65. Balancing.—XIV. Century.

This engraving, from a MS. in the Bodleian Library,[1] represents a girl, as the length of the hair seems to indicate, habited like a boy, and kneeling on a large broad board, supported horizontally by two men; before her are three swords, the points inclined to each other, and placed in a triangular form; she is pointing to them with her right hand, and holds in her left a small instrument somewhat resembling a trowel, but I neither know its name nor its use.

66. Balancing.—XIV. Century.

The man in this engraving, from a drawing in a MS. book of prayers possessed by Francis Douce, esq., is performing a very

[1] No. 264.

difficult operation: he has placed one sword upright upon the hilt, and is attempting to do the like with the second; at the same time his attitude is altogether as surprising as the trick itself. Feats similar to

67. Balancing.—XIV. Century.

I have seen carried into execution, and especially that of balancing a wheel.

68. XIV. Century.

This was exhibited about the year 1799, at Sadler's Wells, by a Dutchman, who not only supported a wheel upon his shoulder, but also upon his forehead and his chin: and he afterwards extended the performance to two wheels tied together, with a boy standing upon one of them. The latter engravings are from the MS. in the Bodleian Library just referred to. The following is from a MS. Psalter formerly belonging to J. Ives, esq. of Yarmouth.

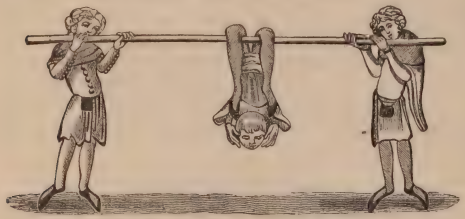
69. Balancing.—XIV. Century.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, there was a very celebrated balance-master, named Mattocks, who made his appearance also at the Wells; among other tricks, he used to balance a straw with great adroitness, sometimes on one hand, sometimes on the other; and sometimes he would kick it with his foot to a considerable height, and catch it upon his nose, his chin, or his forehead. His fame was celebrated by a song set to music, entitled Balance a Straw, which became exceedingly popular. The Dutchman mentioned above performed the same sort of feat with a small peacock's feather, which he blew into the air, and caught it as it fell on different parts of his face in a very surprising manner.

XXVII.—THE POSTURE-MASTER.

The display of his abilities consisted in twisting and contorting his body into strange and unnatural attitudes. This art was, in

doubt, practised by the jugglers in former ages; and a singular specimen of it, delineated on the last mentioned Bodleian MS., in the reign of Edward III., is here represented.



70. A Posture-Master.—XIV. Century.

The performer bends himself backwards, with his head turned up between his hands, so as nearly to touch his feet; and in this situation he hangs by his hams upon a pole, supported by two of his confederates.

The posture-master is frequently mentioned by the writers of the two last centuries; but his tricks are not particularised. The most extraordinary artist of this kind that ever existed, it is said was Joseph Clark, who, "though a well-made man, and rather gross than thin, exhibited in the most natural manner almost every species of deformity and dislocation; he could dislocate his vertebræ so as to render himself a shocking spectacle; he could also assume all the uncouth faces that he had seen at a Quaker's meeting, at the theatre, or any other public place." To this man a paper in the Guardian evidently alludes, wherein it is said: "I remember a very whimsical fellow, commonly known by the name of the posture-master, in Charles the Second's reign, who was the plague of all the tailors about town. He would send for one of them to take measure of him; but would so contrive it as to have a most immoderate rising in one of his shoulders; when his clothes were brought home and tried upon him, the deformity was removed into the other shoulder; upon which the taylor begged pardon for the mistake, and mended it as fast as he could; but, on another trial, found him as straight-shouldered a man as one would desire to see, but a little unfortunate in a hump back. In short, this wandering tumour puzzled all the workmen about town, who found it im-

possible to accommodate so changeable a customer."[1] He resided in Pall Mall, and died about the beginning of king William's reign. Granger tells us he was dead in the year 1697.[2] There was also a celebrated posture-master, by the name of Higgins, in the reign of queen Anne, who performed between the acts at the theatre royal in the Haymarket, and exhibited "many wonderful postures," as his own bill declares:[3] I know no farther of him. In the present day, the unnatural performances of the posture-masters are not fashionable, but seem to excite disgust rather than admiration in the public mind, and for this reason they are rarely exhibited.

XXVIII.—THE MOUNTEBANK.

I may here mention a stage-performer whose show is usually enlivened with mimicry, music, and tumbling; I mean the mountebank. It is uncertain at what period this vagrant dealer in physic made his appearance in England: it is clear, however, that he figured away with much success in this country during the two last centuries; he called to his assistance some of the performances practised by the jugglers; and the bourdour, or merry-andrew, seems to have been his inseparable companion. hence it is said in an old ballad, entitled Sundry Trades and Callings,

> A mountebank without his fool
> Is in a sorrowful case.

The mountebanks usually preface the vending of their medicines with pompous orations, in which they pay as little regard to truth as to propriety. Shakspeare speaks of these wandering empirics in very disrespectful terms:

> As nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
> Disguised cheaters, prating mountebanks,
> And many such like libertines of sin.

In the reign of James II. "Hans Buling, a Dutchman, was well known in London as a mountebank. He was," says Granger,[4] "an odd figure of a man, and extremely fantastical in his dress; he was attended by a monkey, which he had trained to act the part of a jack-pudding, a part which he had formerly acted himself, and which was more natural to him than that of

[1] No. 102, July 8, 1718.
[2] Biog. Hist. vol. iv. See also Philos. Trans. No. 242, for July, 1698.
[3] Miscell. Collect. Harl. Lib. No. 5931.
[4] Biog. Hist. vol. iv. p. 350.

a professor of physic." The ignorance and the impudence of the mountebanks are ridiculed in the Spectator, and especially in that paper which concludes with an anecdote of one who exhibited at Hammersmith.[1] He told his audience that he had been "born and bred there, and, having a special regard for the place of his nativity, he was determined to make a present of five shillings to as many as would accept it: the whole crowd stood agape, and ready to take the doctor at his word; when, putting his hand into a long bag, as every one was expecting his crown-piece, he drew out a handful of little packets, each of which, he informed the spectators, was constantly sold for five shillings and sixpence, but that he would bate the odd five shillings to every inhabitant of that place. The whole assembly immediately closed with this generous offer, and took off all his physic, after the doctor had made them vouch that there were no foreigners among them, but that they were all Hammersmith men."

XXIX.—THE TINKER.

Another itinerant, who seems in some degree to have rivalled the lower classes of the jugglers, was the tinker; and accordingly he is included, with them and the minstrels, in the act against vagrants established by the authority of queen Elizabeth.[2] His performances were usually exhibited at fairs, wakes, and other places of public resort: they consisted in low buffoonery and ludicrous tricks to engage the attention and move the laughter of the populace. Some of them are specified in the following speech from The Two Maides of Moreclacke, an old dramatic performance, printed in 1609: "This, madame, is the tinker of Twitnam. I have seenehim licke out burning firebrands with his tongue, drink twopence from the bottome of a full pottle of ale, fight with a masty,[3] and stroke his mustachoes with his bloody-bitten fist, and sing as merrily as the soberest querester."

XXX.—THE FIRE-EATER.

The first article in the foregoing quotation brings to my recollection the extraordinary performances of a professed fire-eater, whose name was Powel, well known in different parts of the

[1] Vol. viii. No. 572; see also vol. vi. No. 444.
[2] See p. 135.
[3] Or mastiff dog.

kingdom about forty years ago. Among other wonderful feats, I saw him do the following:—He ate the burning coals from the fire; he put a large bunch of matches lighted into his mouth, and blew the smoke of the sulphur through his nostrils; he carried a red-hot heater round the room in his teeth; and broiled a piece of beef-steak upon his tongue. To perform this, he lighted a piece of charcoal, which he put into his mouth beneath his tongue, the beef was laid upon the top; and one of the spectators blew upon the charcoal, to prevent the heat decreasing, till the meat was sufficiently broiled. By way of conclusion, he made a composition of pitch, brimstone, and other combustibles, to which he added several pieces of lead; the whole was melted in an iron ladle, and then set on fire; this he called his soup; and, taking it out of the ladle with a spoon of the same metal, he ate it in its state of liquefaction, and blazing furiously, without appearing to sustain the least injury. And here we may add the whimsical trickery of a contemporary artist, equal to the above in celebrity, who amused the public, and filled his pockets, by eating stones, which, it is, said he absolutely cracked between his teeth, and afterwards swallowed.

CHAPTER VI.

I. Animals, how tutored by the Jugglers.—Tricks performed by Bears.—II. Tricks performed by Apes and Monkeys.—III. By Horses among the Sybarites.—IV. In the thirteenth Century.—V. In Queen Anne's Reign.—VI. Origin of the Exhibitions at Astley's, the Circus, &c.—VII. Dancing Dogs.—VIII. The Hare beating a Tabor, and learned Pig.—IX. A Dancing Cock.—The Deserter Bird.—X. Imitations of Animals.—XI. Mummings and Masquerades.—XII. Mumming to Royal Personages.—XIII. Partial Imitations of Animals.—XIV. The Horse in the Morris-dance.—XV. Counterfeit Voices of Animals.—XVI. Animals trained for Baiting.—XVII Paris Garden.—XVIII. Bull and Bear Baiting patronised by Royalty.—XIX. How performed.—XX. Bears and Bear-wards.—XXI. Baiting in Queen Anne's time.—XXII. Sword Play, &c.—XXIII. Public Sword Play.—XXIV. Quarter Staff.—XXV. Wrestling, &c. in Bear Gardens.—XXVI. Extraordinary Trial of Strength.

I. ANIMALS HOW TUTORED BY JUGGLER

One great part of the joculator's profession was the teaching of bears, apes, horses, dogs, and other animals, to imitate the actions of men, to tumble, to dance, and to perform a variety of tricks, contrary to their nature; and sometimes he learned himself to counterfeit the gestures and articulations of the brutes. The engravings which accompany this chapter relate to both these modes of diverting the public, and prove the invention of them to be more ancient than is generally supposed. The tutored bear lying down at the command of his master, represented by the engraving No. 51,[1] is taken from a manuscript of the tenth century; and the bear in No. 59[2] is from another of the fourteenth. I have already had occasion to mention these two delineations; and the two following, from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library,[3] require no explanation.

71. Tutored Bear.—XIV. Century.

[1] On p. 176. [2] On p. 214. [3] No. 264.

72. Tutored Bear.—XIV. Century

The next represents

73. A Bear standing on his Head

This and the following are from a book of prayers in the Harleian Collection,[1] written towards the close of the thirteenth century.

74. Bear and Monkey.

[1] No. 6563.

I shall only observe, that there is but one among these six drawings in which the animal is depicted with a muzzle to prevent him from biting. The dancing bears have retained their place to the present time, and they frequently perform in the public streets for the amusement of the multitude; but the miserable appearance of their masters plainly indicates the scantiness of the contributions they receive on these occasions.

II.—TRICKS PERFORMED BY APES AND MONKEYS.

Thomas Cartwright, in his Admonition to Parliament against the Use of the Common Prayer, published in 1572, says, "If there be a bear or a bull to be baited in the afternoon, or a jackanapes to ride on horseback, the minister hurries the service over in a shameful manner, in order to be present at the show." We are not, however, hereby to conceive, that these amusements were more sought after or encouraged in England than they were abroad. "Our kings," says St. Foix, in his History of Paris, "at their coronations, their marriages, and at the baptism of their children, or at the creation of noblemen and knights, kept open court; and the palace was crowded on such occasions with cheats, buffoons, rope-dancers, tale-tellers, jugglers, and pantomimical performers. They call those," says he, "jugglers, who play upon the vielle, and teach apes, bears," and perhaps we may add, dogs, "to dance."[1]

Apes and monkeys seem always to have been favourite actors in the joculator's troop of animals. A specimen of the performance of a monkey, as far back as the fourteenth century, is represented by the last engraving; and the following is from another of the same date, already referred to, in the Bodleian Library.[2]

74. A TUMBLING APE

[1] Essais Hist. sur Paris, vol. ii. p. 178.

[2] No. 264

Leaping or tumbling over a chain or cord held by the juggler, as we here see it depicted, was a trick well received at Bartholomew fair in the time of Ben Jonson; and in the induction, or prologue, to a comedy written by him, which bears that title, in 1614, it is said, "He," meaning the author, "has ne're a sword and buckler man in his fayre; nor a juggler with a well educated ape to come over the chaine for the king of England, and back again for the prince, and sit still on his haunches for the pope and the king of Spaine." In recent times, and probably in more ancient times also, these facetious mimics of mankind were taught to dance upon the rope, and to perform the part of the balance-masters. In the reign of queen Anne, there was exhibited at Charing Cross, "a wild hairy man," who, we are told, danced upon the tight rope "with a balance, true to the music;" he also "walked upon the slack rope" while it was swinging, and drank a glass of ale; he "pulled off his hat, and paid his respects to the company;" and "smoaked tobacco," according to the bill, "as well as any Christian."[1] But all these feats were afterwards outdone by a brother monkey, mentioned before, who performed many wonderful tricks at the Haymarket theatre, both as a rope-dancer and an equilibrist.[2]

III.—TRICKS PERFORMED BY HORSES AMONG THE SYBARITES.

The people of Sybaris, a city in Calabria, are proverbial on account of their effeminacy; and it is said that they taught their horses to dance to the music of the pipe; for which reason, their enemies the Crotonians, at a time when they were at war with them, brought a great number of pipers into the field, and at the commencement of the battle, they played upon their pipes; the Sybarian horses, hearing the sound of the music, began to dance; and their riders, unable to manage them as they ought to have done, were thrown into confusion, and defeated with prodigious slaughter. This circumstance is mentioned by Aristotle; and, if not strictly true, proves, at least that the teaching of animals to exceed the bounds of action prescribed by nature was not unknown to the ancients.[3]

[1] From a Miscellaneous Collection of Papers, Harl. Lib. 5931.
[2] Granger, Biog. Hist. vol. iv. p. 353.
[3] Ainsworth's Latin Dictionary, word *Sybaris*.

IV.—TRICKS PERFORMED BY HORSES IN THE XIII. CENTURY.

We are told that, in the thirteenth century, a horse was exhibited by the joculators, which danced upon a rope; and oxen were rendered so docile as to ride upon horses, holding trumpets to their mouths as though they were sounding them.[1] Accordingly we find the representation of several surprising tricks performed by horses, far exceeding those displayed in the present day. A manuscript of the fourteenth century, in the Royal Library,[2] contains the following cruel diversion:

76. A Horse baited with Dogs.

Another manuscript, more ancient by at least half a century, in the same collection, represents

77. A Horse dancing to the Pipe and Tabor.

In the often cited Bodleian MS.[3] of the fourteenth century, is

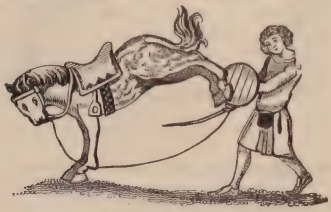
[1] Mem sur Anc. Cheval. tom. i. p. 247.
[2] No. 2, B. vii.
[3] No. 264.

78. Another Horse.

Here the horse is rearing up and attacking the joculator, who opposes him with a small shield and a cudgel. These mock combats, to which the animals were properly trained, were constantly regulated by some kind of musical instrument. The two following performances, also delineated from the last mentioned manuscript, are more astonishing than those preceding them.

79. Horse and Tabor.

In this instance, the horse is standing upon his hinder feet, and beating with his fore feet upon a kind of tabor or drum held by his master. In the following is the same



80. Horse and Tabor.

The animal is exhibiting a similar trick with his hinder feet, and supports himself upon his fore feet. The original drawings, represented by these engravings, are all of them upwards of four hundred and fifty years old; and at the time in which they were made the joculators were in full possession of the public favour.

Here it is deemed worthy to note, that in the year 1612, at a grand court festival, Mons. Pluvinel, riding-master to Louis XIII. of France, with three other gentlemen, accompanied by six esquires bearing their devices, executed a grand ballette-dance upon managed horses.[1] Something of the same kind is done[2] at Astley's and the Circus; but at these places the dancing is performed by the horses moving upon their four feet according to the direction of their riders; and of course it is by no means so surprising as that exhibited by the latter engravings.

V.—TRICKS BY HORSES IN QUEEN ANNE'S REIGN.

Horses are animals exceedingly susceptible of instruction, and their performances have been extended so far as to bear the appearance of rational discernment. In the Harleian Library[3] is a show-bill, published in the reign of queen Anne, which is thus prefaced: "To be seen, at the Ship upon Great Tower Hill, the finest taught horse in the world." The abilities of the animal are specified as follows: "He fetches and carries like a spaniel dog. If you hide a glove, a handkerchief, a door key, a pewter bason, or so small a thing as a silver two-pence, he will seek about the room till he has found it; and then he will bring it to his master. He will also tell the number of spots on a card, and leap through a hoop; with a variety of other curious performances." And we may, I trust, give full credit to the statement of this advertisement; for a horse equally scientific is to be seen in the present day[4] at Astley's amphitheatre; this animal is so small, that he and his keeper frequently parade the streets in a hackney coach.

VI.—ORIGIN OF HORSE EXHIBITIONS AT ASTLEY'S, THE CIRCUS, &c.

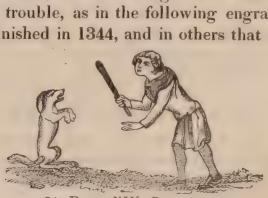
Riding upon two or three horses at once, with leaping, dancing, and performing various other exertions of agility upon their

[1] Menestrier, Trait. de Tournois, p. 218. In 1800.]
[3] No. 5938. [4] [A. D. 1800.]

backs while they are in full speed, is, I believe, a modern species of exhibition, introduced to public notice about forty years back by a man named Price, who displayed his abilities at Dobney's near Islington; soon afterwards, a competitor by the name of Sampson made his appearance; and he again was succeeded by Astley. The latter established a riding-school near Westminster bridge, and has been a successful candidate for popular favour. These performances originally took place in the open air, and the spectators were exposed to the weather which frequently proving unfavourable interrupted the show, and sometimes prevented it altogether; to remedy this inconvenience, Astley erected a kind of amphitheatre, completely covered, with a ride in the middle for the displayment of the horsemanship, and a stage in the front, with scenes and other theatrical decorations; to his former divertisements he then added tumbling, dancing, farcical operas, and pantomimes. The success he met with occasioned a rival professor of horsemanship named Hughes, who built another theatre for similar performances not far distant, to which he gave the pompous title of the Royal Circus. Hughes was unfortunate, and died some years back; but the Circus has passed into other hands; and the spectacles exhibited there in the present day[1] are far more splendid than those of any other of the minor theatres.

VII.—DANCING DOGS.

I know no reason why the joculators should not have made the dog one of their principal brute performers: the sagacity of this creature and its docility could not have escaped their notice; and yet the only trick performed by the dog, that occurs in the ancient paintings, is simply that of sitting upon his haunches in an upright position, which he might have been taught to do with very little trouble, as in the following engraving from the Bodleian MS. finished in 1344, and in others that will presently appear.



81. Dog.—XIV. Century.

[1] [1800.]

Neither do I recollect that dogs are included in the list of animals formerly belonging to the juggler's exhibitions, though, no doubt, they ought to have been; for, in Ben Jonson's play of Bartholmew Fayre, first acted in 1614, there is mention made of "dogges that dance the morrice," without any indication of the performance being a novelty. Dancing dogs, in the present day, make their appearance in the public streets of the metropolis; but their masters meet with very little encouragement, except from the lower classes of the people, and from children; and of course the performance is rarely worthy of notice. At the commencement of the last century, a company of dancing dogs was introduced at Southwark fair by a puppet-showman named Crawley. He called this exhibition "The Ball of Little Dogs;" and states in his bill, that they came from Lovain: he then tells us, that "they performed by their cunning tricks wonders in the world of dancing;" and adds, "you shall see one of them, named marquis of Gaillerdain, whose dexterity is not to be compared;[1] he dances with madame Poncette his mistress and the rest of their company at the sound of instruments, all of them observing so well the cadence, that they amaze every body." At the close of the bill, he declares that the dogs had danced before the queen [Anne] and most of the nobility of England. But many other "cunning tricks," and greatly superior to those practised by Crawley's company, have been performed by dogs some few years ago, at Sadler's Wells, and afterwards at Astley's, to the great amusement and disport of the polite spectators. One of the dogs at Sadler's Wells acted the part of a lady, and was carried by two other dogs; some of them were seated at a table, and waited on by others; and the whole concluded with the attack and storming of a fort, entirely performed by dogs.

VIII.—THE HARE AND TABOR, AND LEARNED PIG.

It is astonishing what may be effected by constant exertion and continually tormenting even the most timid and untractable animals; for no one would readily believe that a hare could have been sufficiently emboldened to face a large concourse of spectators without expressing its alarm, and beat upon a tambourine in their presence; yet such a performance was put in practice not many years back, and exhibited at Sadler's Wells; and, if

[1] His meaning, I suppose, is that the performance of this dog was not to be equalled.

I mistake not, in several other places in and about the metropolis. Neither is this whimsical spectacle a recent invention. A hare that beat the tabor is mentioned by Jonson, in his comedy of Bartholmew Fayre, acted at the commencement of the seventeenth century; and a representation of the feat itself, taken from a drawing on a manuscript upwards of four hundred years old, in the Harleian Collection,[1] is given below.

82. HARE AND TABOR.

And here I cannot help mentioning a very ridiculous show of a learned pig, which of late days attracted much of the public notice, and at the polite end of the town. This pig, which indeed was a large unwieldy hog, being taught to pick up letters written upon pieces of cards, and to arrange them at command, gave great satisfaction to all who saw him, and filled his tormenter's pocket with money. One would not have thought that a hog had been an animal capable of learning: the fact, however, is another proof of what may be accomplished by assiduity; for the showman assured a friend of mine, that he had lost three very promising brutes in the course of training, and that the phenomenon then exhibited had often given him reason to despair of success.

IX.—A DANCING COCK AND THE DESERTER BIRD.

The joculators did not confine themselves to the tutoring of quadrupeds, but extended their practice to birds also; and a curious specimen of their art appears by the following engraving, from a drawing on the same MS. in the Harleian Collection whence No. 81 was taken.

[1] No. 6563.

83. A Cock dancing on Stilts to the Music of a Pipe and Tabor.

In the present day, this may probably be considered as a mere effort of the illuminator's fancy, and admit of a doubt whether such a trick was ever displayed in reality: but many are yet living who were witnesses to an exhibition far more surprising, shown at Breslaw's, a celebrated juggler, who performed at London[1] somewhat more than twenty-years ago:[2] it was first shown in the vicinity of Pall Mall, in 1789, at five shillings each person; the price was afterwards reduced to half-a-crown; and finally to one shilling. A number of little birds, to the amount, I believe, of twelve or fourteen, being taken from different cages, were placed upon a table in the presence of the spectators; and there they formed themselves into ranks like a company of soldiers: small cones of paper bearing some resemblance to grenadiers' caps were put upon their heads, and diminutive imitations of muskets made with wood, secured under their left wings. Thus equipped, they marched to and fro several times; when a single bird was brought forward, supposed to be a deserter, and set between six of the musketeers, three in a row, who conducted him from the top to the bottom of the table, on the middle of which a small brass cannon charged with a little gunpowder had been previously placed, and the deserter was situated in the front part of the cannon; his guards then divided, three retiring on one side, and three on the other, and he was left standing by himself. Another bird was immediately produced; and, a lighted match being put into one of his claws, he hopped boldly on the other to the tail of the cannon, and, applying the match to the priming, discharged the piece without the least appearance of fear or agitation. The moment the ex-

[1] In Cockspur-street, opposite the Haymarket.

[2] [Before 1800.]

plosion took place, the deserter fell down, and lay, apparently motionless, like a dead bird; but, at the command of his tutor he rose again; and the cages being brought, the feathered soldiers were stripped of their ornaments, and returned into them in perfect order.

X.—IMITATIONS OF ANIMALS.

Among the performances dependent on imitation, that of assuming the forms of different animals, and counterfeiting their gestures, do not seem to have originated with the jugglers; for this absurd practice, if I mistake not, existed long before these comical artists made their appearance, at least in large companies, and in a professional way. There was a sport common among the ancients, which usually took place on the kalends of January, and probably formed a part of the Saturnalia, or feasts of Saturn. It consisted in mummings and disguisements; for the actors took upon themselves the resemblance of wild beasts, or domestic cattle, and wandered about from one place to another; and he, I presume, stood highest in the estimation of his fellows who best supported the character of the brute he imitated. This whimsical amusement was exceedingly popular, and continued to be practised long after the establishment of Christianity; it was, however, much opposed by the clergy, and particularly by Paulinus bishop of Nola, in the ninth century, who in one of his sermons tells us, that those concerned in it were wont to clothe themselves with skins of cattle, and put upon them the heads of beasts.[1] What effect his preaching may have had at the time, I know not: the custom, however, was not totally suppressed, but may be readily traced from vestiges remaining of it, to the modern times. Dr. Johnson, in his Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, says a gentleman informed him, that, at new year's eve, in the hall or castle of the laird, where at festivals there is supposed to be a very numerous company, one man dresses himself in a cow-hide, on which other men beat with sticks; he runs with all this noise round the house, which all the company quits in a counterfeited fright; the door is then shut, and no re-admission obtained after their pretended terror, but by the repetition of a verse of poetry, which those acquainted with the custom are provided with.[2]

[1] Du Cange, Gloss. in vocibus *Cervula* et *Kalendæ*.

[2] See also Bourne's Vulgar Errors, edited by Brand, p. 175.

The ancient court ludi, described in a former chapter,[1] are certainly off-shoots from the Saturnalian disfigurements; and from the same stock we may pertinently derive the succeeding masquings and disguisements of the person frequently practised at certain seasons of the year; and hence also came the modern masquerades. Warton says, that certain theatrical amusements were called mascarades very anciently in France. These were probably the court ludi.[2]

XI.—MUMMINGS AND MASQUERADES.

In the middle ages, mummings were very common. Mumm is said to be derived from the Danish word mumme, or momme in Dutch, and signifies to disguise oneself with a mask: hence a mummer; which is properly defined by Dr. Johnson to be a masker, one who performs frolics in a personated dress. The following verse occurs in Milton's Samson Agonistes, line 1325:

Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics.

At court, as well as in the mansions of the nobility, on occasions of festivity, it frequently happened that the whole company appeared in borrowed characters; and, full licence of speech being granted to every one, the discourses were not always kept within the bounds of decency.[3] These spectacles were exhibited with great splendour in former times and particularly during the reign of Henry VIII.:[4] they have ceased, however, of late years to attract the notice of the opulent; and the regular masquerades which succeeded them, are not supported at present with that degree of mirthful spirit which, we are told, abounded at their institution; and probably it is for this reason they are declining so rapidly in the public estimation.

The mummeries practised by the lower classes of the people usually took place at the Christmas holidays; and such persons as could not procure masks rubbed their faces over with soot, or painted them; hence Sebastian Brant, in his Ship of Fools,[5] alluding to this custom, says,

The one hath a visor ugley set on his face,
Another hath on a vile counterfaite vesture,
Or painteth his visage with fume in such case,
That what he is, himself is scantily sure.

[1] Chap. ii. sect. xiii. p. 159.
[2] History of English Poetry, vol. i. p. 237.
[3] Mem. Auc. Cheval. tom. ii. p. 68.
[4] See a description of two of them, p. 161.
[5] Translated by Alexander Barclay, and printed by Pynson in 1508.

It appears that many abuses were committed under the sanction of these disguisements; and for this reason an ordinance was established, by which a man was liable to punishment who appeared in the streets of London with "a painted visage."[1] In the third year of the reign of Henry VIII. it was ordained that no persons should appear abroad like mummers, covering their faces with vizors, and in disguised apparel, under pain of imprisonment for three months. The same act enforced the penalty of 20*s.* against such as kept vizors in their houses for the purpose of mumming.[2]

Bourne, in his Vulgar Antiquities,[3] speaks of a kind of mumming practised in the North about Chr'stmas time, which consisted in "changing of clothes between the men and the women, who, when dressed in each other's habits, go," says he, "from one neighbour's house to another, and partake of their Christmas cheer, and make merry with them in disguise, by dancing and singing and such like merriments."

XII.—MUMMING TO ROYAL PERSONAGES.

Persons capable of well-supporting assumed characters were frequently introduced at public entertainments, and also in the pageants exhibited on occasions of solemnity; sometimes they were the bearers of presents, and sometimes the speakers of panegyrical orations. Froissart tells us, that, after the coronation of Isabel of Bavaria, the queen of Charles VI. of France, she had several rich donations brought to her by mummers in different disguisements; one resembling a bear, another an unicorn, others like a company of Moors, and others as Turks or Saracens.[4]

When queen Elizabeth was entertained at Kenilworth castle, various spectacles were contrived for her amusement, and some of them produced without any previous notice, to take her as it were by surprise. It happened about nine o'clock one evening, as her majesty returned from hunting, and was riding by torch-light, there came suddenly out of the wood, by the road-side, a man habited like a savage, covered with ivy, holding in one of his hands an oaken plant torn up by the roots, who placed himself before her, and, after holding some discourse with a counterfeit echo, repeated a poetical oration in her praise, which was well

[1] Stow's Survey, fol. 680.
[2] Cap. xvi.
[3] Northbrooke's Treatise, p. 105.
[4] Chron. tom. i. iv. chap. 157, lord Berners' translation.

received. This man was Thomas Gascoyne the poet; and the verses he spoke on the occasion were his own composition. The circumstance took place on the 10th of July, 1575.[1]

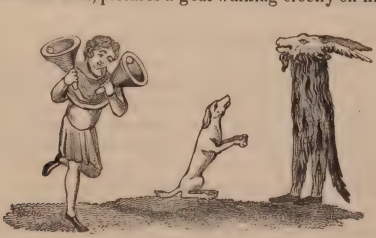
The savage men, or wodehouses, as they are sometimes called, frequently made their appearance in the public shows; they were sometimes clothed entirely with skins, and sometimes they were decorated with oaken leaves, or covered, as above, with ivy.

XIII.—PARTIAL IMITATIONS OF ANIMALS.

The jugglers and the minstrels, observing how lightly these ridiculous disguisements were relished by the people in general, turned their talents towards the imitating of different animals, and rendered their exhibitions more pleasing by the addition of their new acquirements. Below are specimens of their performances, from the Bodleian MS. before cited.[2]

84. XIV. Century.

This presents to us the resemblance of a stag. The following, from the same MS., pictures a goat walking erectly on his hinder feet.



85. XIV. Century

[1] See Nichols's Progresses, vol. i.

[2] No. 26.

Neither of these fictitious animals have any fore legs; but to the first the deficiency is supplied by a staff, upon which the actor might recline at pleasure; his face is seen through an aperture on the breast; and, I doubt not, a person was chosen to play this part with a face susceptible of much grimace, which he had an opportunity of setting forth to great advantage, with a certainty of commanding the plaudits of his beholders. It was also possible to heighten the whimsical appearance of this disguise by a motion communicated to the head; a trick the man might easily enough perform, by putting one of his arms into the hollow of his neck; and probably the neck was made pliable for that purpose. In the subjoined delineation, from the same MS., we find a boy, with a mask resembling the head of a dog, presenting a scroll of parchment to his master.

86. XIV. Century.

In the original there are two more boys, who are following disguised in a similar manner, and each of them holding a like scroll of parchment. The wit of this performance, I protest, I cannot discover.

XIV.—THE HORSE IN THE MORRIS-DANCE.

The prancing and curveting of horses was counterfeited in the hobby-horse, the usual concomitant of the morris-dance. I have already spoken on this subject;[1] and shall only add in this place an anecdote of prince Henry, the eldest son of James I.—"Some of his highness's young gentlemen, together with himself," says my author, "imitating in sport the curveting and high-going of horses, one that stood by said that they were like a company of horses; which his highness noting, answered, 'Is it not better to resemble a horse, which is a generous and courageous beast, than a dull slow-going ass as you are?'" The

[1] Page 223.

prince, we are told, was exceedingly young at the time he made this reply.[1]

XV.—COUNTERFEIT VOICES OF ANIMALS.

I have not been able to ascertain how far the ancient jugglers exerted their abilities in counterfeiting the articulation of animals; but we may reasonably suppose they would not have neglected so essential a requisite to make their imitations perfect.

In the reign of queen Anne, a man whose name was Clench, a native of Barnet, made his appearance at London. He performed at the corner of Bartholomew-lane, behind the Royal Exchange. His price for admittance was one shilling each person. I have his advertisement before me;[2] which states that he "imitated the horses, the huntsmen, and a pack of hounds, a sham doctor, an old woman, a drunken man, the bells, the flute, the double curtell, and the organ with three voices, by his own natural voice, to the greatest perfection." He then professes himself to "be the only man that could ever attain to so great an art." He had, however, a rival, who is noted in one of the papers of the Spectator, and called the whistling man. His excellency consisted in counterfeiting the notes of all kinds of singing birds.[3] The same performance was exhibited in great perfection by the bird-tutor associated with Breslaw the juggler, mentioned a few pages back.[4] This man assumed the name of Rosignol,[5] and, after he had quitted Breslaw, appeared on the stage at Covent-garden theatre, where, in addition to his imitation of the birds, he executed a concerto on a fiddle without strings; that is, he made the notes in a wonderful manner with his voice, and represented the bowing by drawing a small truncheon backwards and forwards over a stringless violin. His performance was received with great applause; and the success he met with produced many competitors, but none of them equalled him: it was, however, discovered, that the sounds were produced by an instrument contrived for the purpose, concealed in the mouth; and then the trick lost all its reputation. Six years ago,[6] I heard a poor rustic, a native of St. Alban's, imitate, with great exactness, the whole assemblage of animals belonging

[1] The author, whose name does not appear, declares himself to have been witness to the facts he records. MS. Harl. 6391.

[2] Miscell. Collect. Harl. Lib. No. 115.

[3] Vol. viii. No. 570.

[4] See p. 249.

[5] Literally, nightingale.

[6] [Before 1800.]

to a farm-yard; but especially he excelled in counterfeiting the grunting of swine, the squeaking of pigs, and the quarrelling of two dogs.

XVI.—ANIMALS TRAINED FOR BAITING.

Training of bulls, bears, horses, and other animals, for the purpose of baiting them with dogs, was certainly practised by the jugglers; and this vicious pastime has the sanction of high antiquity. Fitz-Stephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II., tells us that, in the forenoon of every holiday, during the winter season, the young Londoners were amused with boars opposed to each other in battle, or with bulls and full-grown bears baited by dogs.[1] This author makes no mention of horses; and I believe the baiting of these noble and useful animals was never a general practice: it was, however, no doubt, partially performed; and the manner in which it was carried into execution appears by the engraving No. 76.[2] Asses also were treated with the same inhumanity; but probably the poor beasts did not afford sufficient sport in the tormenting, and therefore were seldom brought forward as the objects of this barbarous diversion.

XVII.—PARIS GARDEN.

There were several places in the vicinity of the metropolis set apart for the baiting of beasts, and especially the district of Saint Savour's parish in Southwark, called Paris Garden; which place contained two bear-gardens, said to have been the first that were made near London; and in them, according to Stow, were scaffolds for the spectators to stand upon:[3] and this indulgence, we are told, they paid for in the following manner: "Those who go to Paris Garden, the Bell Savage, or Theatre, to behold bear-baiting, enterludes, or fence-play, must not account of any pleasant spectacle, unless first they pay one pennie at the gate, another at the entrie of the scaffold, and a third for quiet standing."[4] One Sunday afternoon in the year 1582, the scaffolds being overcharged with spectators, fell down during the performance; and a great number of persons were killed or maimed by the accident.[5]

[1] Description of London. See also Stow's Survey, p. 78.
[2] On p. 243.
[3] Survey of London, ubi supra.
[4] Lambarde's Perambulation of Kent, published A.D. 1570, p. 248.
[5] Survey of London, ubi supra. See also the Introduction to this work.

XVIII.—BULL AND BEAR-BAITING PATRONIZED BY ROYALTY.

Bull and bear-baiting is not encouraged by persons of rank and opulence in the present day; and when practised, which rarely happens, it is attended only by the lowest and most despicable part of the people; which plainly indicates a general refinement of manners and prevalency of humanity among the moderns; on the contrary, this barbarous pastime was highly relished by the nobility in former ages, and countenanced by persons of the most exalted rank, without exception even of the fair sex. Erasmus, who visited England in the reign of Henry VIII., says, there were "many herds of bears maintained in this country for the purpose of baiting."[1] When queen Mary visited her sister the princess Elizabeth during her confinement at Hatfield-house, the next morning, after mass, a grand exhibition of bear-baiting was made for their amusement, with which, it is said, "their highnesses were right well content."[2] Queen Elizabeth, on the 25th of May, 1559, soon after her accession to the throne, gave a splendid dinner to the French ambassadors, who afterwards were entertained with the baiting of bulls and bears, and the queen herself stood with the ambassadors looking on the pastime till six at night. The day following, the same ambassadors went by water to Paris Garden, where they saw another baiting of bulls and of bears;[3] and again, twenty-seven years posterior, queen Elizabeth received the Danish ambassador at Greenwich, who was treated with the sight of a bear and bull-baiting, "tempered," says Holinshed, "with other merry disports;"[4] and, for the diversion of the populace, there was a horse with an ape upon his back; which highly pleased them, so that they expressed "their inward-conceived joy and delight with shrill shouts and variety of gestures."[5]

XIX.—BULL AND BEAR-BAITING, HOW PERFORMED.

The manner in which these sports were exhibited towards the close of the sixteenth century, is thus described by Hentzner,[6]

[1] Erasmi Adagia, p. 361.
[2] Life of Sir Thomas Pope, sect. iii. p. 85.
[3] Nichols's Progresses, vol. i. p. 40.
[4] Chronicle of Eng. vol. iii. fol. 1552.
[5] Nichols's Progresses, vol. ii. p. 228.
[6] Itinerary, printed in Latin, A. D. 1598. See lord Orford's translation, Strawberry Hill, p. 42.

who was present at one of the performances: "There is a place built in the form of a theatre, which serves for baiting of bulls and bears; they are fastened behind, and then worried by great English bull-dogs; but not without risque to the dogs, from the horns of the one and the teeth of the other; and it sometimes happens they are killed on the spot; fresh ones are immediately supplied in the places of those that are wounded or tired. To this entertainment there often follows that of whipping a blinded bear, which is performed by five or six men standing circularly with whips, which they exercise upon him without any mercy, as he cannot escape because of his chain; he defends himself with all his force and skill, throwing down all that come within his reach, and are not active enough to get out of it, and tearing the whips out of their hands, and breaking them." Laneham, speaking of a bear-baiting exhibited before queen Elizabeth in 1575, says, "It was a sport very pleasant to see the bear, with his pink eyes learing after his enemies, approach; the nimbleness and wait of the dog to take his advantage; and the force and experience of the bear again to avoid his assaults: if he were bitten in one place, how he would pinch in another to get free; that if he were taken once, then by what shift with biting, with clawing, with roaring, with tossing, and tumbling, he would work and wind himself from them; and, when he was loose, to shake his ears twice or thrice with the blood and the slaver hanging about his physiognomy." The same writer tells us, that thirteen bears were provided for this occasion, and they were baited with a great sort of ban-dogs.[1] In the foregoing relations, we find no mention made of a ring put into the nose of the bear when he was baited; which certainly was the more modern practice; hence the expression by the duke of Newcastle, in the Humorous Lovers, printed in 1617: "I fear the wedlock ring more than the bear does the ring in his nose."

XX.—BEARS AND BEAR-WARDS.

When a bear-baiting was about to take place, the same was publicly made known, and the bear-ward previously paraded the streets with his bear, to excite the curiosity of the populace, and induce them to become spectators of the sport. The animal,

[1] Nichols's Progresses, vol. i. fol. 249.

on these occasions, was usually preceded by a minstrel or two, and carried a monkey or baboon upon his back. In the Humorous Lovers, the play just now quoted, "Tom of Lincoln" is mentioned as the name of "a famous bear;" and one of the characters pretending to personate a bear-ward, says, "I'll set up my bills, that the gamesters of London, Horsleydown, Southwark, and Newmarket, may come in and bait him here before the ladies; but first, boy, go fetch me a bagpipe; we will walk the streets in triumph, and give the people notice of our sport."

XXI.—BAITING IN QUEEN ANNE'S TIME.

The two following advertisements,[1] which were published in the reign of queen Anne, may serve as a specimen of the elegant manner in which these pastimes were announced to the public:

"At the Bear Garden in Hockley in the Hole, near Clerkenwell Green, this present Monday, there is a great match to be fought by two Dogs of Smithfield Bars against two Dogs of Hampstead, at the Reading Bull, for one guinea to be spent; five lets goes out of hand; which goes fairest and farthest in wins all. The famous Bull of fire-works, which pleased the gentry to admiration. Likewise there are two Bear-Dogs to jump three jumps apiece at the Bear, which jumps highest for ten shillings to be spent. Also variety of bull-baiting and bear-baiting; it being a day of general sport by all the old gamesters; and a bull-dog to be drawn up with fire-works. Beginning at three o'clock."

"At William Well's bear-garden in Tuttle-fields, Westminster, this present Monday, there will be a green Bull baited; and twenty Dogs to fight for a collar; and the dog that runs farthest and fairest wins the collar; with other diversions of bull and bear-baiting. Beginning at two of the clock."

XXII.—SWORD-PLAY.

The sword-dance, or, more properly, a combat with swords and bucklers, regulated by music, was exhibited by the Saxon gleemen. We have spoken on this subject in a former chapter, and resume it here, because the jugglers of the middle ages were famous for their skill in handling the sword.

[1] In a Miscellaneous Collection of Bills and Title-pages, Harl. Lib. No. 15.

87. Sword-Play.—XIII. Century.

This combat, represented from a manuscript of the thirteenth century, in the Royal Library,[1] varies, in several respects, from that in the engraving No. 60;[2] though both, I presume, are different modifications of the same performance, as well as that below, from a manuscript in the Royal Library,[3] which is carried into execution without the assistance of a minstrel.

88. Sword-Play.—XIII. Century.

These combats bore some resemblance to those performed by the Roman gladiators; for which reason the jugglers were sometimes called gladiators by the early historians; "Mimi, salii, balatrones, æmiliani, gladiatores, palæstritæ—et tota joculatorum copia, &c."[4] It also appears that they instituted schools for teaching the art of defence in various parts of the kingdom, and especially in the city of London, where the conduct of the masters and their scholars became so outrageous, that it was necessary for the legislature to interfere; and, in the fourteenth

[1] No. 14, E. iii. See p. 215. [3] No. 20, D. vi.
[4] Johan. Sarisburiensis de Nugis Curialium, lib. i. cap. viii. p. 34.

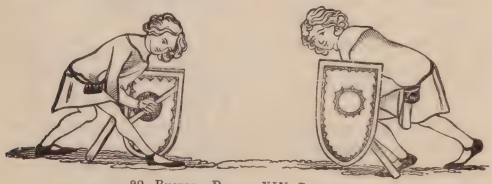
year of the reign of Edward I. A. D. 1286, an edict was published by royal authority, which prohibited the keeping of such schools, and the public exercise of swords and bucklers, "eskirmer au bokeler."

It is said that many robberies and murders were committed by these gladiators; hence the appellation of swash buckler, a term of reproach, "from swashing," says Fuller, "and making a noise on the buckler, and ruffian, which is the same as a swaggerer. West Smithfield was formerly called Ruffian Hall, where such men usually met, casually or otherwise, to try masteries with sword and buckler; more were frightened than hurt, hurt than killed therewith, it being accounted unmanly to strike beneath the knee. But since that desperate traytor Rowland Yorke first used thrusting with rapiers, swords and bucklers are disused."[1] Jonson, in the induction to his play called Bartholomew Fair, speaks of "the sword and buckler age in Smithfield;" and again, in the Two Angry Women of Abbington, a comedy by Henry Porter, printed in 1599, we have the following observation: "Sword and buckler fight begins to grow out of use; I am sorry for it; I shall never see good manhood again; if it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up; then a tall man, that is, a courageous man, and a good sword and buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or a rabbit."

Such exercises had been practised by day and by night, to the great annoyance of the peaceable inhabitants of the city; and by the statute of Edward I. the offenders were subjected to the punishment of imprisonment for forty days; to which was afterwards added a mulct of forty marks.[2] These restrictions certainly admitted of some exceptions; for it is well known that there were seminaries at London, wherein youth were taught the use of arms, held publicly after the institution of this ordinance. "The art of defence and use of weapons," says Stow, "is taught by professed masters;"[3] but these most probably were licensed by the city governors, and under their control. The author of a description of the colleges and schools in and about London, which he calls "The Third University of England," printed in black letter in 1615, says, "In

[1] Worthies of England, A. D. 1662.
[2] Maitland's History of London, book i. chap. xi.
[3] Survey of London, chap. ii.

this city," meaning London, "there be manie professors of the science of defence, and very skilful men in teaching the best and most offensive and defensive use of verie many weapons, as of the long-sword, back-sword, rapier and dagger, single rapier, the case of rapiers, the sword and buckler, or targate, the pike, the halberd, the long-staff, and others.[1] Henry VIII. made the professors of this art a company, or corporation, by letters patent, wherein the art is intituled The Noble Science of Defence. The manner of the proceeding of our fencers in their schools is this; first, they which desire to be taught at their admission are called scholars, and, as they profit, they take degrees, and proceed to be provosts of defence; and that must be wonne by public trial of their proficiencie and of their skill at certain weapons, which they call prizes, and in the presence and view of many hundreds of people; and, at their next and last prize well and sufficiently performed, they do proceed to be maisters of the science of defence, or maisters of fence, as we commonly call them." The king ordained, "that none, but such as have thus orderly proceeded by public act and trial, and have the approbation of the principal masters of their company, may profess or teach this art of defence publicly in any part of England." Stow informs us, that the young Londoners, on holidays, after the evening prayer, were permitted to exercise themselves with their wasters and bucklers before their masters' doors. This pastime, I imagine, is represented by a drawing in the Bodleian MS.[2] from whence the annexed engraving is taken, where clubs or bludgeons are substituted for swords.



89. Buckler-Play.—XIV. Century.

The bear-gardens were the usual places appropriated by the masters of defence for public trials of skill. These exhibitions

[1] I apprehend he means the quarter-staff.

[2] Dated 1344. No. 264.

were outrageous to humanity, and only fitted for the amusement of ferocious minds; it is therefore astonishing that they should have been frequented by females; for, who could imagine that the slicing of the flesh from a man's cheek, the scarifying of his arms, or laying the calves of his legs upon his heels, were spectacles calculated to delight the fair sex, or sufficiently attractive to command their presence. The manner of performing a prize-combat, at the commencement of the last century, is well described, and the practice justly reprobated, in one of the papers belonging to the Spectator:[1] but these exhibitions were not without their trickery, as we may find by another paper[2] in the same volume.

XXIII.—PUBLIC SWORD-PLAY.

The following show-bill, dated July 13, 1709, contains the common mode of challenging and answering used by the combatants; it is selected from a great number now lying before me;[3] and, being rather curious, I shall transcribe it without making any alteration.

"At the Bear Garden in Hockley in the Hole, near Clerkenwell Green, a trial of skill shall be performed between Two Masters of the noble Science of Defence on Wednesday next, at two of the clock precisely.

"I George Gray, born in the city of Norwich, who have fought in most parts of the West Indies, namely, Jamaica and Barbadoes, and several other parts of the world, in all twenty-five times, and upon a stage, and never yet was worsted, and being now lately come to London, do invite James Harris to meet and exercise at these following weapons, namely, back-sword, sword and dagger, sword and buckler, single falchon, and case of falchons."

"I James Harris, Master of the said noble Science of Defence, who formerly rid in the horse-guards, and hath fought a hundred and ten prizes, and never left a stage to any man, will not fail, God willing, to meet this brave and bold inviter at the time and place appointed; desiring sharp swords, and from him no favour. No person to be upon the stage but the seconds. Vivat Regina!"

[1] Vol. vi. No. 436.
[2] No. 449.
[3] In a Miscellaneous Collection of Title-pages, Bills, &c. in the Harleian Library, marked 115.

XXIV.—QUARTER-STAFF.

In another challenge the quarter-staff is added to the list of weapons named on these occasions. Quarter-staff Dr. Johnson explains to be "A staff of defence, so called, I believe, from the manner of using it; one hand being placed at the middle, and the other equally between the end and the middle."[1] The quarter-staff was formerly used by the English, and especially in the western parts of the kingdom. I have seen a small pamphlet with this title: "Three to One; being an English-Spanish combat, performed by a western gentleman of Tavystock, in Devonshire, with an English quarter-staff, against three rapiers and poniards, at Sherries in Spain,[2] in the presence of the dukes, condes, marquisses, and other great dons of Spain, being the council of war;" to which is added, "the author of this booke, and actor in this encounter, being R. Peecke." On the same page there is a rude wooden print, representing the hero with his quarter-staff, in the action of fighting with the three Spanyards, who are armed with long swords and daggers. Caulfield has copied this print in his Assemblage of Noted Persons.

XXV.—WRESTLING, &c. IN BEAR-GARDENS.

Wrestling, and such other trials of strength and activity as had formerly been exhibited in the spectacles of the minstrels and jugglers, were at this period transferred to the bear-gardens, where they continued in practice till the total abolition of those polite places of amusement.

XXVI.—EXTRAORDINARY TRIAL OF STRENGTH.

I shall conclude this chapter with the two following instances of bodily power, recorded by our historians. The first is of Courcy, earl of Ulster; who, in the presence of John king of England and Philip of France, cut through a helmet of steel with one blow of his sword, and struck the weapon so deeply into the post upon which the helmet was placed, that no one but himself was able to draw it out again.[3] The second is mentioned

[1] Dictionary, word *Quarter-staff*.
[2] Nov. 15, 1625.
[3] Fuller's Worthies in Somersetshire.

by Froissart;[1] who tells us that, one Christmas-day, the earl of Foix, according to his usual custom, "held a great feast; and, after dyner, he deperted out of the hall, and went up into a galarye, of twenty-four stayres of heyght. It being exceedingly cold, the erle complained that the fire was not large enough; when a person named Ervalton, of Spayne, went down the stayres, and beneth in the court he sawe a great meny of asses laden with woode, to serve the house: than he went, and tooke one of the greatest asses, with all the woode, and layde hym on hys backe, and went up al the stayres into the galary; and dyd caste downe the asse, with al the woode, into the chimney, and the asse's fete upward: whereof the erle of Foix had greate joye; and so hadde all thy that wer ther, and had mervele of his strength."

[1] Vol. iv. chap. 23, fol. 24, lord Berners' translation.

CHAPTER VII.

I. Ancient Specimens of Bowling—Poem on Bowling.—II. Bowling-greens first made by the English.—III. Bowling-alleys.—IV. Long-bowling.—V. Supposed Origin of Billiards.—VI. Kayles.—VII. Closh.—VIII. Loggats.—IX. Nine-pins—Skittles.—X. Dutch-pins.—XI. Four-corners.—XII. Half-bowl.—XIII. Nine-holes.—XIV. John Bull.—XV. Pitch and Hustle.—XVI. Bull-baiting in Towns and Villages.—XVII. Bull-running—At Stamford, &c.—XVIII. At Tutbury.—XIX. Badger-baiting.—XX. Cock-fighting.—XXI. Throwing at Cocks.—XXII. Duck-hunting.—XXIII. Squirrel-hunting.—XXIV. Rabbit-hunting.

I.—ANCIENT BOWLING—POEM ON BOWLING.

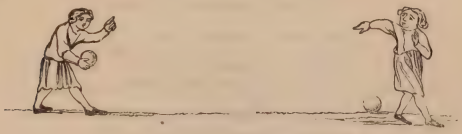
THE pastime of bowling, whether practised upon open greens or in bowling-alleys, was probably an invention of the middle ages. I cannot by any means ascertain the time of its introduction; but I have traced it back to the thirteenth century. The earliest representation of a game played with bowls, that I have met with, occurs in a MS. in the Royal Library,[1] as here represented.

90. BOWLING.—XIII. CENTURY.

Here two small cones are placed upright at a distance from each other; and the business of the players is evidently to bowl at them alternately; the successful candidate being he who could lay his bowl the nearest to the mark. The French, according to Cotgrave, had a similar kind of game, called Carreau, from a square stone which, says he, "is laid in level

[1] No. 20, E. iv.

with and at the end of a bowling-alley, and in the midst thereof an upright point set as the mark whereat they bowl." The following engraving, from a drawing in a beautiful MS. Book of Prayers, in the possession of Francis Douce, esq., represents two other bowlers; but they have no apparent object to play at, unless the bowl cast by the first may be considered as such by the second, and the game require him to strike it from its place.



91. Bowling.—XIV. Century.

Below these we see three persons engaged in the pastime of bowling; and they have a small bowl, or jack, according to the modern practice, which serves them as a mark for the direction of their bowls: the action of the middle figure, whose bowl is supposed to be running towards the jack, will not appear by any means extravagant to such as are accustomed to visit the bowling-greens.

92. Bowling.—XIV. Century.

The following little poem, by William Stroad, which I found in "Justin Pagitt's Memorandum Book,"[1] one of the Harleian manuscripts at the British Museum,[2] expresses happily enough the turns and chances of the game of bowls:

[1] Page 41. [2] No. 1026.

A PARALLEL BETWIXT BOWLING AND PREFERMENT.

Preferment, like a game at boules,
To feede our hope hath divers play:
Heere quick it runns, there soft it roules,
The betters make and shew the way
On upper ground, so great allies
Doe many *cast* on their desire;
Some up are thrust and forc'd to rise,
When those are stopt that would aspire.

Some, whose heate and zeal exceed,
Thrive well by *rubbs* that curb their haste,
And some that languish in their speed
Are cherished by some favour's blaste;
Some rest in other's *cutting out*
The fame by whom themselves are made;
Some fetch a *compass* farr about,
And secretly the marke invade.

Some get by *knocks*, and so advance
Their fortune by a boysterous aime:
And some, who have the sweetest chance,
Their en'mies *hit*, and win the game.
The fairest *casts* are those that owe
No thanks to fortune's giddy sway;
Such honest men good *bowlers* are
Whose own true *bias cutts* the way.

In the three delineations just represented, we may observe that the players have only one bowl for each person: the modern bowlers have usually three or four.

II.—BOWLING-GREENS FIRST MADE BY THE ENGLISH.

Bowling-greens are said to have originated in England;[1] and bowling upon them, in my memory, was a very popular amusement. In most country towns of any note they are to be found, and some few are still remaining in the vicinity of the metropolis; but none of them, I believe, are now so generally frequented as they were accustomed to be formerly.

III.—BOWLING-ALLEYS.

The inconveniency to which the open greens for bowling were necessarily obnoxious, suggested, I presume, the idea of making

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica, in voce.

bowling-alleys, which, being covered over, might be used when the weather would not permit the pursuit of the pastime abroad; and therefore they were usually annexed to the residences of the opulent; wherein if the ladies were not themselves performers, they certainly countenanced the pastime by being spectators; hence the king of Hungary, in an old poem entitled The Squyer of Low Degree, says to his daughter, "to amuse you in your garden

An hundredth knightes, truly tolde,
Shall play with bowles in alayes colde."

Andrew Borde, in his Dietarie of Helthe, describing a nobleman's mansion, supposes it not to be complete without "a bowling-alley." Among the additions made by Henry VIII. at Whitehall, were "divers fair tennice-courtes, bowling-alleys, and a cock-pit."

It appears that soon after the introduction of bowling-alleys they were productive of very evil consequences; for they became not only exceedingly numerous, but were often attached to places of public resort, which rendered them the receptacles of idle and dissolute persons; and were the means of promoting a pernicious spirit of gambling among the younger and most unwary part of the community. The little room required for making these bowling-alleys was no small cause of their multiplication, particularly in great towns and cities. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries these nurseries of vice were universally decried, and especially such of them as were established within the city and suburbs of London,[2] where the ill effects arising from them were most extensive.

IV.—LONG-BOWLING.

Bowling-alleys, I believe, were totally abolished before I knew London; but I have seen there a pastime which might originate from them, called long-bowling. It was performed in a narrow enclosure, about twenty or thirty yards in length, and at the farther end was placed a square frame with nine small pins upon it; at these pins the players bowled in succession; and a boy, who stood by the frame to set up the pins that were beat down by the bowl, called out the number, which was

[1] Stow's Survey, p. 496.

[2] Ibid. pp. 85, 158.

placed to the account of the player; and the bowl was returned by the means of a small trough, placed with a gradual descent from the pins to the bowlers, on one side of the enclosure. Some call this game Dutch-rubbers.

Bowling, according to an author in the seventeenth century, is a pastime "in which a man shall find great art in choosing out his ground, and preventing the winding, hanging, and many turning advantages of the same, whether it be in open wilde places, or in close allies; and for his sport, the chusing of the bowle is the greatest cunning; your flat bowles being best for allies, your round byazed bowles for open grounds of advantage, and your round bowles, like a ball, for green swarthes that are plain and level." [1]

V.—SUPPOSED ORIGIN OF BILLIARDS.

Below is a representation which seems to bear some analogy to bowling.

93. A curious ancient Pastime.

Here the bowls, instead of being cast by the hand, are driven with a battoon, or mace, through an arch, towards a mark at a distance from it; and hence, I make no doubt, originated the game of billiards, which formerly was played with a similar kind of arch and a mark called the king, but placed upon the table instead of the ground. The improvement by adding the table answered two good purposes; it precluded the necessity for the player to kneel, or stoop exceedingly, when he struck the bowl and accommodated the game to the limits of a chamber.

VI.—KAYLES.

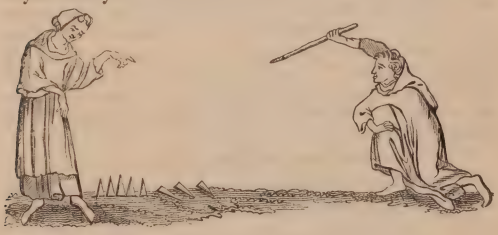
Kayles, written also cayles and keiles, derived from the French word quilles, was played with pins, and no doubt gave origin to the modern game of nine-pins; though primitively the kayle-

[1] "Country Contentments," published in 1615.

pins do not appear to have been confined to any certain number, as we may observe by the two following engravings:

94. Kayles.—XIV. Century.

In this engraving, from a Book of Prayers in the possession of Francis Douce, esq., the pastime of kayles is playing with six pins. The annexed is from another drawing on a MS. in the Royal Library.[1]



95. Kayles.—XIV. Century.

Here the pastime is played with eight pins; and the form of these pins is also different, but that might depend entirely upon the fancy of the makers. One of them, in both cases, is taller than the rest.

The arrangement of the kayle-pins differs greatly from that of the nine-pins, the latter being placed upon a square frame in three rows, and the former in one row only. The two delineations here copied represent that species of the game called club-kayles, "jeux de quilles à baston," so denominated from the club or cudgel that was thrown at them.

VII.—CLOSH.

The game of cloish, or closh, mentioned frequently in the ancient statutes,[2] seems to have been the same as kayles, or at

[1] No. 2, B. vii.

[2] An. 17 Edw. IV. cap. 3; again 18 and 20 Hen. VIII. &c.; in both which acts this game is prohibited.

least exceedingly like it: cloish was played with pins, which were thrown at with a bowl instead of a truncheon, and probably differed only in name from the nine-pins of the present time.

VIII.—LOGGATS.

This, I make no doubt, was a pastime analogous to kayles and cloish, but played chiefly by boys and rustics, who substituted bones for pins. "Loggats," says sir Thomas Hanmer, one of the editors of Shakespeare, "is the ancient name of a play or game, which is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the thirty-third statute of Henry VIII.: it is the same which is now called kittle-pins, in which the boys often make use of bones instead of wooden pins, throwing at them with another bone instead of bowling." Hence Shakespeare, in Hamlet, speaks thus: "did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them?" And this game is evidently referred to in an old play, entitled The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art, published in the reign of queen Elizabeth,[1] where a dunce boasts of his skill

At skales, and the playing with a sheepes-joynte.

In skales, or kayles, the sheepes-joynte was probably the bone used instead of a bowl.

IX.—NINE-PINS—SKITTLES.

The kayle-pins were afterwards called kettle, or kittle-pins; and hence, by an easy corruption, skittle-pins, an appellation well known in the present day. The game of skittles, as it is now played, differs materially from that of nine-pins, though the same number of pins are required in both. In performing the latter, the player stands at a distance settled by mutual consent of the parties concerned, and casts the bowl at the pins: the contest is, to beat them all down in the fewest throws. In playing at skittles, there is a double exertion; one by bowling, and the other by tipping: the first is performed at a given distance, and the second standing close to the frame upon which the pins are placed, and throwing the bowl through in the midst of them; in both cases, the number of pins beaten down before the return of the bowl, for it usually passes beyond the frame,

[1] Garrick's Collection, vol. i. 18.

are called fair, and reckoned to the account of the player; but those that fall by the coming back of the bowl are said to be foul, and of course not counted. One chalk or score is reckoned for every fair pin; and the game of skittles consists in obtaining thirty-one chalks precisely: less loses, or at least gives the antagonist a chance of winning the game; and more requires the player to go again for nine, which must also be brought exactly, to secure himself.

The preceding quotation from Hanmer intimates that the kittle-pins were sometimes made with bones; and this assertion is strengthened by the language of a dramatic writer, the author of the Merry Milk-maid of Islington, in 1680, who makes one of his characters speak thus to another: "I'll cleave you from the skull to the twist, and make nine skittles of thy bones."

X.—DUTCH-PINS.

Dutch-pins is a pastime much resembling skittles; but the pins are taller and slenderer, especially in the middle pin, which is higher than the rest, and called the king-pin. The pins are nine in number, and placed upon a frame in the manner of skittles; and the bowls used by the performers are very large, but made of a light kind of wood. The game consists of thirty-one scores precisely; and every player first stands at a certain distance from the frame, and throws his bowl at the pins, which is improperly enough called bowling; afterwards he approaches the frame and makes his tipp by casting the bowl among the pins, and the score towards the game is determined by the number of them beaten down. If this pin be taken out singly, when the bowl is thrown from a distance, the game is won; this instance excepted, it reckons for no more than the other pins.

XI.—FOUR-CORNERS,

Is so called from four large pins which are placed singly at each angle of a square frame. The players stand at a distance, which may be varied by joint consent, and throw at the pins a large heavy bowl, which sometimes weighs six or eight pounds. The excellency of the game consists in beating them down by the fewest casts of the bowl.

XII.—HALF-BOWL.

This is one of the games prohibited by Edward IV.;[1] and received its denomination from being played with one half of a sphere of wood. Half-bowl is practised to this day in Hertfordshire, where it is commonly called rolly-polly; and it is best performed upon the floor of a room, especially if it be smooth and level. There are fifteen small pins of a conical form required for this pastime; twelve of which are placed at equal distances upon the circumference of a circle of about two feet and a half diameter; one of the three remaining pins occupies the centre; and the other two are placed without the circle at the back part of it, and parallel with the bowling-place, but so as to be in a line with the middle pin; forming a row of five pins, including two of those upon the circumference. In playing this game, the bowl, when delivered, must pass above the pins, and round the end-pin, without the circle, before it beats any of them down; if not, the cast is forfeited: and, owing to the great bias of the bowl, this task is not very readily performed by such as have not made themselves perfect by practice. The middle pin is distinguished by four balls at the top; and, if thrown down, is reckoned for four towards the game; the intermediate pin upon the circle, in the row of five, has three balls, and is reckoned for three; the first pin without the circle has two balls, and is counted for two; and the value of all the others singly is but one. Thirty-one chalks complete the game; which he who first obtains is the conqueror. If this number be exceeded, it is a matter of no consequence: the game is equally won.

XIII.—NINE-HOLES.

This is mentioned as a boyish game, played at the commencement of the seventeenth century. I have not met with any description of this pastime; but I apprehend it resembled a modern one frequently practised at the outskirts of the metropolis; and said to have been instituted, or more probably revived, about 1780, as a succedaneum for skittles, when the magistrates caused the skittle grounds in and near London to be levelled, and the frames removed. Hence some say the game of nine-holes was

[1] An. 17 Edw. IV. cap. 8; the prohibition extends also to closh and kayles.

called "Bubble the Justice," on the supposition that it could not be set aside by the justices, because no such pastime was named in the prohibitory statutes; others give this denomination to a different game: the name by which it is now most generally known is "Bumble-puppy;" and the vulgarity of the term is well adapted to the company by whom it is usually practised. The game is simply this: nine holes are made in a square board, and disposed in three rows, three holes in each row, all of them at equal distances, about twelve or fourteen inches apart; to every hole is affixed a numeral, from one to nine, so placed as to form fifteen in every row. The board, thus prepared, is fixed horizontally upon the ground, and surrounded on three sides with a gentle acclivity. Every one of the players being furnished with a certain number of small metal balls, stands in his turn, by a mark made upon the ground, about five or six feet from the board; at which he bowls the balls; and according to the value of the figures belonging to the holes into which they roll, his game is reckoned; and he who obtains the highest number is the winner. Doctor Johnson confounds this pastime with that of kayles, and says, "it is a kind of play still retained in Scotland, in which nine holes, ranged in threes, are made in the ground, and an iron bullet rolled in among them." [1]

I have formerly seen a pastime practised by school-boys, called nine-holes: it was played with marbles, which they bowled at a board, set upright, resembling a bridge, with nine small arches, all of them numbered; if the marble struck against the sides of the arches, it became the property of the boy to whom the board belonged; but, if it went through any one of them, the bowler claimed a number of marbles equal to the number upon the arch it passed through.

XIV.—JOHN BULL.

This is the name of a modern pastime, which may be played in the open air, or in a room. A square flat stone, being laid level on the surface of the ground, or let into the floor, is subdivided into sixteen small squares; in every one of these compartments a number is affixed, beginning from one; the next in value being five, the next ten; thence passing on by tens to an hundred, and thence again, by hundreds, to five hundred. These numbers are not placed regularly, but contrasted, so that those

[1] Dictionary, word *kayle*

of the smallest value are nearest to those of the highest; and in some instances, as I am informed, the squares for the greater numbers are made much smaller than those for the small ones. On reaching five hundred a mark is made, at an optional distance from the stone, for the players to stand; who, in succession, throw up one halfpenny or more, and make their score according to the number assigned to the compartment in which the halfpenny rests, which must be within the square; for, if it lies upon one of the lines that divide it from the others, the cast is forfeited, and nothing scored. Two thousand is usually the game; but this number is extended or diminished at the pleasure of the gamesters.

XV.—PITCH AND HUSTLE.

This is a game commonly played in the fields by the lowest classes of the people. It requires two or more antagonists, who pitch or cast an equal number of halfpence at a mark set up at a short distance; and the owner of the nearest halfpenny claims the privilege to hustle first; the next nearest halfpenny entitles the owner to a second claim; and so on to as many as play. When they hustle, all the halfpence pitched at the mark are thrown into a hat held by the player who claims the first chance; after shaking them together, he turns the hat down upon the ground; and as many of them as lie with the impression of the head upwards belong to him; the remainder are then put into the hat a second time, and the second claimant performs the same kind of operation; and so it passes in succession to all the players, or until all the halfpence appear with the heads upwards. Sometimes they are put into the hands of the player, instead of a hat, who shakes them, and casts them up into the air; but in both instances the heads become his property: but if it should so happen, that, after all of them have hustled, there remain some of the halfpence that have not come with the heads uppermost, the first player then hustles again, and the others in succession, until they do come so.

XVI.—BULL-BAITING IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES.

I have already informed my readers, that bull-baiting, or worrying of bulls with dogs, was one of the spectacles exhibited

by the jugglers and their successors.[1] It is also necessary to observe, that this cruel pastime was not confined to the boundaries of the bear-gardens; but was universally practised on various occasions, in almost every town or village throughout the kingdom, and especially in market towns, where we find it was sanctioned by the law;[2] and in some of them, I believe, the bull-rings, to which the unfortunate animals were fastened, are remaining to the present hour. It may seem strange, that the legislature should have permitted the exercise of such a barbarous diversion, which was frequently productive of much mischief by drawing together a large concourse of idle and dissipated persons, and affording them an opportunity of committing many gross disorders with impunity. Indeed a public bull-baiting rarely ended without some riot and confusion. A circumstance of this sort is recorded in the annals of the city of Chester. The author[3] tells us, that "a bull was baited at the high-cross, on the second of October, (1619,) according to the ancient custome for the mayor's farewell out of his office; it chaunced a contention fell out betwixt the butchers and the bakers of the cittye aboute their dogges then fyghtynge; they fell to blowes; and in the tumult of manye people woulde not be pacifyed; so that the mayor, seeing there was greate abuse, being citezens, could not forbeare, but he in person hymself went out amongst them, to have the peace kept; but they in their rage, lyke rude and unbroken fellowes, did lytill regarde hym. In the ende, they were parted; and the begynners of the sayde brawle, being found out and examined, were commytted to the northgate. The mayor smotte freely among them and broke his white staffe; and the cryer Thomas Knowstley brake his mase; and the brawle ended."

XVII.—BULL-RUNNING AT STAMFORD, &c.

This is another barbarous diversion somewhat different from bull-baiting, and much less known: I do not recollect that it was regularly practised in any part of the kingdom, excepting at Stamford, in Lincolnshire, and at Tutbury, in Staffordshire. The traditionary origin of the bull-running at Stamford, and the manner in which it was performed in the seventeenth century,

[1] See p. 243.

[2] One of the city laws however prohibits the baiting a bull, a bear, or a horse in the open streets of London, under the penalty of 20 shillings. Stow's Survey, p. 666.

[3] Probably the first Randal Holmes, a native of that city. MS. Harl. 2125.

are given by Butcher, in his Survey of that town;[1] and this account I shall lay before my readers, in the author's own words. "The bull-running is a sport of no pleasure, except to such as take a pleasure in beastliness and mischief: it is performed just the day six weeks before Christmas. The butchers of the town, at their own charge, against the time provide the wildest bull they can get. This bull over night is had into some stable or barn belonging to the alderman. The next morning, proclamation is made by the common bellman of the town, round about the same, that each one shut up their shop-doors and gates, and that none, upon pain of imprisonment, offer to do any violence to strangers; for the preventing whereof, the town being a great thoroughfare, and then being term-time, a guard is appointed for the passing of travellers through the same, without hurt; that none have any iron upon their bull-clubs, or other staff, which they pursue the bull with. Which proclamation made, and the gates all shut up, the bull is turned out of the alderman's house; and then hivie-skivy, tag and rag, men, women, and children, of all sorts and sizes, with all the dogs in the town, promiscuously running after him with their bull-clubs, spattering dirt in each other's faces, that one would think them to be so many furies started out of hell for the punishment of Cerberus, &c. And, which is the greater shame, I have seen persons of rank and family, of both sexes,[2] following this bulling-business. I can say no more of it, but only to set forth the antiquity thereof as tradition goes. William earl of Warren, the first lord of this town in the time of king John, standing upon his castle walls in Stamford, saw two bulls fighting for a cow in a meadow under the same. A butcher of the town, owner of one of the bulls, set a great mastiff-dog upon his own bull, who forced him up into the town; when all the butchers' dogs, great and small, followed in pursuit of the bull, which, by this time made stark mad with the noise of the people and the fierceness of the dogs, ran over man, woman, and child, that stood in his way. This caused all the butchers and others in the town to rise up, as it were, in a kind of tumult." The sport so highly diverted the earl, who, it seems, was a spectator, that "he gave all those meadows in which the two bulls had been fighting, perpe-

[1] First published A. D. 1646. This transcript is from the edit. of 1717, cap. x. pp. 76, 77.

[2] This passage he has Latinized in these words: "Senatores majorum gentium et matronæ de eodem gradu."

tually as a common to the butchers of the town, after the first grass is eaten, to keep their cattle in till the time of slaughter, upon the condition that, on the anniversary of that day, they should yearly find, at their own expense, a mad bull for the continuance of the sport.

XVIII.—BULL-RUNNING AT TUTBURY.

The company of minstrels belonging to the manor of Tutbury had several peculiar privileges granted to them by a charter from John of Gaunt duke of Lancaster.[1] In this charter it is required of the minstrels to perform their respective services, upon the day of the assumption of our Lady, (the 15th of August,) at the steward's court, held for the honour of Tutbury, according to ancient custom. They had also, it seems, a privilege, exclusive of the charter, to claim upon that day a bull from the prior of Tutbury.[2] In the seventeenth century, these services were performed the day after the assumption; and the bull was given by the duke of Devonshire, as the prior's representative.

The historian of Staffordshire[3] informs us, that a dinner was provided for the minstrels upon this occasion, which being finished, they went anciently to the abbey gate, but of late years to "a little barn by the town side, in expectance of the bull to be turned forth to them." The animal provided for this purpose had his horns sawed off, his ears cropped, his tail cut short, his body smeared over with soap, and his nose blown full of beaten pepper, in order to make him as mad as it was possible for him to be. Whence, "after solemn proclamation first being made by the steward, that all manner of persons should give way to the bull, and not come near him by forty feet, nor by any means to hinder the minstrels, but to attend to his or their own safeties, every one at his peril; he was then put forth, to be caught by the minstrels, and none other, within the county of Stafford, between the time of his being turned out to them, and the setting of the sun, on the same day; which if they cannot doe, but the bull escapes from them untaken, and gets over the river into Derbyshire, he continues to be lord Devonshire's property: on the other hand, if the minstrels can take him and hold him so

[1] See p. 191.

[2] Histriones—habebunt unum Taurum de Priore de Tutebury, Inspex. temp. Hen. VI. Dugdale's Monast. vol. ii. p. 355.

[3] Dr. Plott.—In his natural history of this county the reader will find a full account of the services, &c. performed by the minstrels upon this day, pp. 437, 438, 439.

long as to cut off but some small matter of his hair, and bring the same to the market cross, in token that they have taken him; the bull is brought to the bailiff's house in Tutbury, and there collared and roped, and so conveyed to the bull-ring in the High-street, where he is baited with dogs; the first course allotted for the king, the second for the honour of the town, and the third for the king of the minstrels;[1] this done, the minstrels claim the beast, and may sell, or kill and divide him amongst them according to their pleasure." The author then adds, "this rustic sport, which they call bull-running, should be annually performed by the minstrels only; but now a-days, they are assisted by the promiscuous multitude, that flock thither in great numbers, and are much pleased with it; though sometimes, through the emulation in point of manhood that has been long cherished between the Staffordshire and Derbyshire men, perhaps as much mischief may have been done, as in the bull-fighting[2] practised at Valentia, Madrid, and other places in Spain."[3] The noise and confusion occasioned by this exhibition is aptly described in The Marriage of Robin Hood and Clorinda, Queen of Titbury Feast,[4] a popular ballad published early in the last century:

Before we came to it, we heard a strange shouting,
And all that were in it looked madly,
For some were a bull-back, some dancing a morrice,
And some singing Arthur O'Bradley!

XIX.—BADGER-BAITING

May also be placed in this chapter. In order to give the better effect to this diversion, a hole is dug in the ground for the retreat of the animal; and the dogs run at him singly in succession; for it is not usual, I believe, to permit any more than one of them to attack him at once; and the dog which approaches him with the least timidity, fastens upon him the most firmly, and brings him the soonest from his hole, is accounted the best. The badger was formerly called the grey," hence the denomination of grey-hounds applied to a well known species of dogs, on account of their having been generally used in the pursuit of this animal.

[1] A title conferred upon the chief minstrel. See p. 191.
[2] "Jeu de Taureau."
[3] Whence he derives this sport; to which however it bears but little analogy See Mr. Pegge's dissertation upon bull-baiting. Archæologia, vol. ii.
[4] Collect. of Old Ballads, pub. London, 1723

XX.—COCK-FIGHTING.

This barbarous pastime, which claims the sanction of high antiquity, was practised at an early period by the Grecians, and probably still more anciently in Asia. It is a very common sport, and of very long standing, in China.[1] It was practised by the Romans:[2] with us, it may be traced back to the twelfth century; at which period we are certain it was in usage, and seems to have been considered as a childish sport. "Every year," says Fitzstephen, "on the morning of Shrove-Tuesday, the school-boys of the city of London[3] bring game cocks to their masters, and in the fore part of the day, till dinner time, they are permitted to amuse themselves with seeing them fight." Probably the same custom prevailed in other cities and great towns. Stow having cited the preceding passage from Fitzstephen, adds, "cocks of the game are yet," that is at the close of the sixteenth century, "cherished by divers men for their pleasures, much money being laid on their heads when they fight in pits, whereof some are costly made for that purpose."[4] The cock-pit was the school, and the master the controller and director of the pastime. This custom, according to Mr. Brand, "was retained in many schools in Scotland within the last century, and perhaps may be still in use there: the school-masters claimed the runaway cocks as their perquisites; and these were called fugees, 'corrupt, I suppose,' says he, 'of refugees.'"[5]

In the reign of Edward III. cock-fighting became a fashionable amusement; it was then taken up more seriously than it formerly had been, and the practice extended to grown persons; even at that early period it began to be productive of pernicious consequences, and was therefore prohibited in 1366 by a public proclamation, in which it was ranked with other idle and unlawful pastimes. But notwithstanding it was thus degraded and discountenanced, it still maintained its popularity, and in defiance of all temporary opposition has descended to the modern

[1] Philos. Transact. vol. xix. p. 591.

[2] For a full explanation of the manner of cock-fighting among the ancient Greeks and Romans, see a memoir upon that subject by the late Rev. Mr. Pegge, Archæologia, vol. iii. p. 132.

[3] Description of London; temp. Hen. II.

[4] Survey of London, p. 76.

[5] Bourne's Antiq. Vulgares by Brand, p. 233.

times. Among the additions made by Henry VIII. to the palace at Whitehall, was a cock-pit;[1] which indicates his relish for the pastime of cock-fighting; and James I. was so partial to this diversion, that he amused himself in seeing it twice a week.[2] Exclusive of the royal cock-pit, we are told there was formerly one in Dury-lane, another in Jewin-street, and if the following story be founded on fact, a third in Shoe-lane: "Sir Thomas Jermin, meaning to make himself merry, and gull all the cockers, sent his man to the pit in Shoe-lane, with an hundred pounds and a dunghill cock, neatly cut and trimmed for the battle; the plot being well layd the fellow got another to throw the cock in, and fight him in sir Thomas Jermin's name, while he betted his hundred pounds against him; the cock was matched, and bearing sir Thomas's name, had many betts layd upon his head; but after three or four good brushes, he showed a payre of heeles: every one wondered to see a cock belonging to sir Thomas cry *craven*, and away came the man with his money doubled."[3]

I shall not expatiate upon the nature and extent of this fashionable divertisement; but merely mention a part of it called the Welch main, which seems to be an abuse of the modern times; and as a late judicious author justly says, "a disgrace to us as Englishmen."[4] It consists of a certain or given number of pairs of cocks, suppose sixteen, which fight with each other until one half of them are killed; the sixteen conquerors are pitted a second time in like manner, and half are slain; the eight survivors, a third time; the four, a fourth time; and the remaining two, a fifth time: so that "thirty-one cocks are sure to be inhumanly murdered for the sport and pleasure of the spectators." I am informed that the Welch main usually consists of fourteen pair of cocks, though sometimes the number might be extended.

In the old illuminated manuscripts we frequently meet with paintings representing cocks fighting; but I do not recollect to have seen in any of them the least indication of artificial spurs; the arming their heels with sharp points of steel is a cruelty, I

[1] Stow's Survey of London, p. 496.

[2] Mons. de la Boderie's Letters, vol. i. p. 56.

MS. Harl. 6395, written in the reign of James I., and bearing this title: "Merry Passages and Jeasts."

[4] Rev. Mr. Pegge, in his memoir on cock-fighting, Archæol. vol. iii. p. 392.

trust, unknown in former ages to our ancestors. I have been told the artificial spurs are sometimes made with silver.

In addition to what has been said, I shall only observe, that the ancients fought partridges and quails as well as cocks; in like manner, says Burton, as the French do now;[1] how far, if at all, the example has been followed in England, I know not.

XXI.—THROWING AT COCKS.

If the opposing of one cock to fight with another may be justly esteemed a national barbarism, what shall be said of a custom more inhuman, which authorised the throwing at them with sticks, and ferociously putting them to a painful and lingering death? I know not at what time this unfortunate animal became the object of such wicked and wanton abuse: the sport, if such a denomination may be given to it, is certainly no recent invention, and perhaps is alluded to by Chaucer,[2] in the Nonnes Priests' Tale, when he says,

> "————There was a cocke,
> For that a priestes' sonne gave hym a knocke,
> Upon his legges, when he was yonge and nice,
> He made him for to lose his benefice."

The story supposes the cock to have overheard the young man ordering his servant to call him at the cock-crowing; upon which the malicious bird forbore to crow at the usual time, and owing to this artifice the youth was suffered to sleep till the ordination was over.

Throwing at cocks was a very popular diversion, especially among the younger parts of the community. Sir Thomas Moore, who wrote in the sixteenth century, describing the state of childhood, speaks of his skill in casting a cok-stele, that is, a stick or cudgel to throw at a cock. It was universally practised upon Shrove-Tuesday. If the poor bird by chance had its legs broken, or was otherwise so lamed as not to be able to stand, the barbarous owners were wont to support it with sticks, in order to prolong the pleasure received from the reiteration of its torment. The magistrates, greatly to their credit, have for some years past put a stop to this wicked custom, and at present it is nearly, if not entirely, discontinued in every part of the kingdom.

[1] Anatomy of Melancholy, published A. D. 1660. [2] Canterbury Tales.

Heath, in his account of the Scilly Islands,[1] speaking of St. Mary's, says, "on Shrove-Tuesday each year, after the throwing at cocks is over, the boys of this island have a custom of throwing stones in the evening against the doors of the dwellers' houses; a privilege they claim from time immemorial, and put in practice without control, for finishing the day's sport; the terms demanded by the boys are pancakes or money, to capitulate. Some of the older sort, exceeding the bounds of this whimsical toleration, break the doors and window shutters, &c. sometimes making a job for the surgeon as well as for the smith, glazier, and carpenter."

In some places it was a common practice to put the cock into an earthen vessel made for the purpose, and to place him in such a position that his head and tail might be exposed to view; the vessel, with the bird in it, was then suspended across the street, about twelve or fourteen feet from the ground, to be thrown at by such as chose to make trial of their skill; twopence was paid for four throws, and he who broke the pot, and delivered the cock from his confinement, had him for a reward. At North Walsham, in Norfolk, about 1760, some wags put an owl into one of these vessels; and having procured the head and tail of a dead cock, they placed them in the same position as if they had appertained to a living one: the deception was successful, and at last, a labouring man belonging to the town, after several fruitless attempts, broke the pot, but missed his prize; for the owl being set at liberty, instantly flew away, to his great astonishment, and left him nothing more than the head and tail of the dead bird, with the potsherds, for his money and his trouble; this ridiculous adventure exposed him to the continual laughter of the town's people, and obliged him to quit the place, to which, I am told, he returned no more.

XXII.—DUCK-HUNTING.

This is another barbarous pastime, and for the performance it is necessary to have recourse to a pond of water sufficiently extensive to give the duck plenty of room for making her escape from the dogs when she is closely pursued; which she does by diving as often as any of them come near to her. Duck-hunting was much practised in the neighbourhood of London about thirty or forty years ago; but of late it is gone out of fashion;

[1] Published at London, 1750.

yet I cannot help thinking, that the deficiency, at present, of places proper for the purpose, has done more towards the abolishment of this sport than any amendment in the nature and inclinations of the populace.

Sometimes the duck is tormented in a different manner, without the assistance of the dogs; by having an owl tied upon her back, and so put into the water, where she frequently dives in order to escape from the burden, and on her return for air, the miserable owl, half drowned, shakes itself, and hooting, frightens the duck; she of course dives again, and replunges the owl into the water; the frequent repetition of this action soon deprives the poor bird of its sensation, and generally ends in its death, if not in that of the duck also.

XXIII.—SQUIRREL-HUNTING.

This is a rustic pastime, and commonly practised at Christmas-time and at Midsummer; those who pursue it find plenty of exercise; but nothing can excuse the wantonly tormenting so harmless an animal.

XXIV.—RABBIT-HUNTING.

Hentzner, who visited England at the close of the sixteenth century, mentions this diversion, and assures us that he saw it performed in the presence of the lord mayor of London, when the annual wrestling was concluded: his words are as follow; "after this is over, a parcel of live rabbits are turned loose among the crowd, which are pursued by a number of boys, who endeavour to catch them with all the noise they can make"

BOOK IV.

DOMESTIC AMUSEMENTS OF VARIOUS KINDS; AND PASTIMES APPROPRIATED TO PARTICULAR SEASONS

CHAPTER I.

I. Secular Music fashionable.—II. Ballad-singers encouraged by the Populace.—III. Music Houses.—IV. Origin of Vauxhall.—V. Ranelagh.—VI. Sadler's Wells.—VII. Marybone Gardens—Operas—Oratorios.—VIII. Bell-ringing.—IX. Its Antiquity.—X. Hand-bells.—XI. Burlesque Music.—XII. Dancing.—XIII. Its Antiquity, &c.—XIV. Shovel-board.—XV. Anecdote of Prince Henry.—XVI. Billiards.—XVII. Mississipi.—XVIII. The Rocks of Scilly.—XIX. Shove groat.—XX. Swinging.—XXI. Tetter-totter.—XXII. Shuttle-cock.

I.—SECULAR MUSIC FASHIONABLE

THE national passion for secular music admitted of little or no abatement by the disgrace and dispersion of the minstrels. Professional musicians, both vocal and instrumental, were afterwards retained at the court, and also in the mansions of the nobility. In the sixteenth century, a knowledge of music was considered as a genteel accomplishment for persons of high rank. Henry VIII. not only sang well, but played upon several sorts of instruments; he also wrote songs, and composed the tunes[1] for them; and his example was followed by several of the nobility, his favourites. An author, who lived in the reign of James I. says, "We have here," that is, in London, "the best musicians in the kingdom, and equal to any in Europe for their skill, either in composing and setting of tunes, or singing, and playing upon any kind of instruments. The musicians have obtained of our sovereign lord the king, his letters patent to become a society and corporation."[2] To which we may add, that the metropolis never abounded more, if so much as at present, with excellent

[1] Hall, in the life of that monarch.

[2] A. D. 1604, in the second year of the reign of James I. Treatise on College and Schools in and about London, printed 1615.

musicians, not such only as make a profession of music, but with others who pursue it merely for their amusement; nor must we omit the fair sex; with them the study of music is exceedingly fashionable; and indeed there are few young ladies of family who are not in some degree made acquainted with its rudiments.[1]

II.—PUBLIC BALLAD-SINGERS.

The minstrel being deprived of all his honours, and having lost the protection of the opulent, dwindled into a mere singer of ballads, which sometimes he composed himself, and usually accompanied his voice with the notes of a violin. The subjects of these songs were chiefly taken from popular stories, calculated to attract the notice of the vulgar, and among them the musical poets figured away at wakes, fairs, and church-ales.[2] Warton speaks of two celebrated trebles; the one called Outroaringe Dick; and the other Wat Wimbas, who occasionally made twenty shillings a day by ballad-singing;[3] which is a strong proof that these itinerants were highly esteemed by the common people.

III.—MUSIC HOUSES.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, the professed musicians assembled at certain houses in the metropolis, called music houses, where they performed concerts, consisting of vocal and instrumental music, for the entertainment of the public; at the same period there were music booths at Smithfield during the continuance of Bartholomew fair. An author of the time,[4] however, speaks very contemptibly of these music meetings, professing that he "had rather have heard an old barber[5] ring Whittington's bells upon a cittern than all the music the houses afforded." There were also music-clubs, or private meetings

[1] Some time ago the spinnet was a favourite instrument among the ladies; afterwards the guitar; and now the harpsichord, or forte-piano.

[2] See p. 186.

[3] At Braintree fair in Essex. Hist. Eng. Poet. vol. iii. p. 292. This was a century and a half back, when twenty shillings was a considerable sum. The ancient ballads have frequently this colophon: 'Printed by A. B. and are to be sold at the stalls of the ballad-singers." But an ordinance published by Oliver Cromwell against the strolling fiddlers, silenced the ballad-singers, and obliged the sellers to shut up shop Hawkins, Hist. Music, vol. iv. p. 113.

[4] Edward Ward, author of the London Spy, part xi. p. 255.

[5] The barbers formerly were often musicians, and usually kept a lute, a viol, or some other musical instrument, in their shops, to amuse their customers while waiting; at present, the newspaper is substituted for the instrument of music.

for the practice of music, which were exceedingly fashionable with people of opulence. Hence, in The Citizen turned Gentleman, a comedy by Edw. Ravenscroft, published in 1675, the citizen is told that, in order to appear like a person of consequence, it was necessary for him "to have a music club once a week at his house." The music houses first mentioned were sometimes supported by subscription; and from them originated three places of public entertainment well known in the present day; namely, Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and Sadler's Wells.

IV.—ORIGIN OF VAUXHALL.

Spring Gardens, now better known by the name of Vauxhall Gardens, is mentioned in the Antiquities of Surrey, by Aubrey, who informs us, that sir Samuel Moreland "built a fine room at Vauxhall, (in 1667,) the inside all of looking-glass, and fountains very pleasant to behold; which," adds he, "is much visited by strangers. It stands in the middle of the garden, covered with Cornish slate, on the point whereof he placed a punchanello, very well carved, which held a dial; but the winds have demolished it."[1] "The house," says a more modern author, sir John Hawkins,[2] "seems to have been rebuilt since the time that sir Samuel Moreland dwelt in it; and, there being a large garden belonging to it, planted with a great number of stately trees, and laid out in shady walks, it obtained the name of Spring Gardens; and, the house being converted into a tavern, or place of entertainment, it was frequented by the votaries of pleasure." This account is perfectly consonant with the following passage in a paper of the Spectator,[3] dated May 20, 1712: "We now arrived at Spring Gardens, which is exquisitely pleasant at this time of the year. When I considered the fragrancy of the walks and bowers, with the choirs of birds that sung upon the trees, and the loose tribe of people that walked underneath their shades, I could not but look upon the place as a kind of Mahometan paradise." In 1730 the house and gardens came into the hands of a gentleman whose name was Jonathan Tyers, who opened it with an advertisement of a "ridotto al fresco;"[4] a term which the people of this country had till then been strangers to.

[1] Vol. i. p. 12.
[2] Hist. Music, vol. v. p. 352.
[3] Vol. v. No. 383.
[4] Or entertainment of music in the open air.

These entertainments were several times repeated in the course of the summer, and numbers resorted to partake of them; which encouraged the proprietor to make his garden a place of musical entertainment for every evening during the summer season: to this end he was at great expense in decorating the gardens with paintings; he engaged an excellent band of musicians, and issued silver tickets for admission at a guinea each; and receiving great encouragement, he set up an organ in the orchestra; and in a conspicuous part of the gardens erected a fine statue of Handel, the work of Roubiliac, a very famous statuary, to whom we owe several of the best monuments in Westminster Abbey.

V.—RANELAGH.

The success of this undertaking was an encouragement to another of a similar kind. A number of persons purchased the house and gardens of the late earl of Ranelagh; they erected a spacious building of timber, of a circular form, and within it an organ, and an orchestra capable of holding a numerous band of performers. The entertainment of the auditors during the performance is, either walking round the room, or refreshing themselves with tea and coffee in the recesses thereof, which are conveniently adapted for that purpose. Sir John Hawkins[1] says, "The performance here, as at Vauxhall, is instrumental, intermixed with songs and ballad airs, calculated rather to please the vulgar than gratify those of a better taste."

VI.—SADLER'S WELLS.

We meet with what is said to be "a true account of Sadler's Well," in a pamphlet published by a physician at the close of the seventeenth century.[2] "The water," says he, "of this well, before the Reformation, was very much famed for several extraordinary cures performed thereby, and was thereupon accounted sacred, and called Holy-well. The priests belonging to the priory of Clerkenwell using to attend there, made the people believe that the virtues of the water proceeded from the efficacy of their prayers; but at the Reformation the well was stopped,

[1] Hist. of Music, vol. v. pp. 352, 353.
[2] It is said to be written by T. G. doctor in physic, and was published A. D. 1684.

upon the supposition that the frequenting of it was altogether superstitious; and so by degrees it grew out of remembrance, and was wholly lost until then found out; when a gentleman named Sadler, who had lately built a new music-house there, and being surveyor of the highways, had employed men to dig gravel in his garden, in the midst whereof they found it stopped up and covered with an arch of stone."[1] After the decease of Sadler, one Francis Forcer, a musician and composer of songs, became occupier of the well and music-room; he was succeeded by his son, who first exhibited there the diversion of rope-dancing and tumbling,[2] which were then performed abroad in the garden. There is now a small theatre appropriated to this purpose, furnished with a stage, scenes, and other decorations proper for the representation of dramatic pieces and pantomimes. The diversions of this place are of various kinds, and form upon the whole a succession of performances very similar to those displayed in former ages by the gleemen, the minstrels, and the jugglers.

VII.—MARY-BONE GARDENS—ORATORIOS.

To the three preceding places of public entertainment, we may add a fourth, not now indeed in existence, but which about thirty years back[3] was held in some degree of estimation, and much frequented; I mean Mary-bone Gardens; where, in addition to the music and singing, there were burlettas and fire-works exhibited. The site of these gardens is now covered with buildings. There were also other places of smaller note where singing and music were introduced, but none of them of any long continuance; for being much frequented by idle and dissolute persons, they were put down by the magistrates.

The success of these musical assemblies, I presume, first suggested the idea of introducing operas upon the stage, which were contrived at once to please the eye and delight the ear; and this double gratification, generally speaking, was procured at the expense of reason and propriety. Hence, also, we may trace the establishment of oratorios in England. I need not say that this noble species of dramatic music was brought to great perfection by Handel: the oratorios produced by him display in a wonderful manner his powers as a composer of music;

[1] A. D. 1683. [2] Hawkins, ut supra. [3] [About 1770.]

and they continue to be received with that enthusiasm of applause which they most justly deserve. Under this title, oratorios, are included several of his serenatas, as Acis and Galatea, Alexander's Feast, &c.; but generally speaking, the subjects of the oratorios are taken from the Scriptures, and therefore they are permitted to be performed on the Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent when plays are prohibited.

VIII.—BELL-RINGING.

It has been remarked by foreigners that the English are particularly fond of bell-ringing;[1] and indeed most of our churches have a ring of bells in the steeple, partly appropriated to that purpose. These bells are rung upon most occasions of joy and festivity, and sometimes at funerals, when they are muffled, and especially at the funerals of ringers, with a piece of woollen cloth bound about the clapper, and the sounds then emitted by them are exceedingly unmelodious, and well fitted to inspire the mind with melancholy. Ringing of rounds; that is, sounding every bell in succession, from the least to the greatest, and repeating the operation, produces no variety; on the contrary, the reiteration of the same cadences in a short time becomes tiresome: for which reason the ringing of changes has been introduced, wherein the succession of the bells is shifted continually, and by this means a varied combination of different sounds, exceedingly pleasant to the ear, is readily produced. This improvement in the art of ringing is thought to be peculiar to the people of this country.[2] Ringing the bells backwards is sometimes mentioned, and probably consisted in beginning with the largest bell and ending with the least; it appears to have been practised by the ringers as a mark of contempt or disgust.

IX.—ANTIQUITY OF BELL-RINGING.

When bell-ringing first arose in England cannot readily be ascertained. It is said that bells were invented by Paulinus bishop of Nola,[3] at the commencement of the fifth century. In 680, according to Venerable Bede, they were used in Brittany, and thence perhaps brought into this country. Ingulphus speaks of them as well known in his time, and tells us, "that Turketullus,

[1] See the Introduction. [2] Hawkins's Hist. of Music, vol. iv. p. 211.
[3] A city of Campania—about the year 400.

the first abbot of Croyland, gave six bells to that monastery; that is to say, two great ones, which he named Bartholomew and Betteline; two of a middling size, called Turketulum and Beterine; and two small ones, denominated Pega and Bega; he also caused the greatest bell to be made, called Gudblac, which was tuned to the other bells, and produced an admirable harmony not to be equalled in England."[1] Turketullus died in 875.

According to the ritual of the Romish church, the bells were not only blessed and exorcised, but baptized as those above mentioned, and anointed with holy oil.[2] After these ceremonies had passed it was believed that the evil spirits lurking in the air might be driven away by their sound. The general use of bells is expressed in the two following Latin lines:

> "Laudo Deum verum—plebem voco—congrego clerum—
> Defunctos ploro—pestum fugo—festa decoro."

That is, to praise the true God—to call the people—to congregate the clergy—to bemoan the dead—to drive away pestilential disorders—to enliven the festivals.

I know not how far the pastime of bell-ringing attracted the notice of the opulent in former times; at present it is confined to the lower classes of the people, who are paid by the parish for ringing upon certain holidays. At weddings, as well as upon other festive occurrences, they usually ring the bells in expectance of a pecuniary reward.

X.—HAND-BELLS

These, which probably first appeared in the religious processions, were afterwards used by the secular musicians, and practised for the sake of pastime. The joculator dancing before the fictitious goat, depicted by the engraving No. 85, has two large hand-bells, and nearly of a size; but in general, they are regularly diminished, from the largest to the least; and ten or twelve of them, rung in rounds or changes by a company of ringers, sometimes one to each bell, but more usually every ringer has two. I have seen a man in London, who I believe is now living,[3] ring twelve bells at one time; two of them were placed upon his head, he held two in each hand, one was affixed to each of his knees, and two upon each foot; all of

[1] Hist. Abat. Croyland. Ingulphus died 1109.
[2] See Chauncy's Hist. of Hertfordshire, p. 383.
[3] [In 1800.]

which he managed with great adroitness, and performed a vast variety of tunes.

The small bells were not always held in the hand; they were sometimes suspended upon a stand, and struck with hammers, by which means one person could more readily play upon them. An example of this kind, taken from a manuscript in the Royal Library,[1] is given below.

96. HAND-BELLS.—XIV. CENTURY.

The figure in the original is designed as a representation of king David, and affixed to one of his psalms.

XI.—BURLESQUE MUSIC.

The minstrels and joculators seem to have had the knack of converting every kind of amusement into a vehicle for merriment, and among others, that of music has not escaped them.

[1] No. 20. B. xi.

Here we see one of these drolls holding a pair of bellows by way of a fiddle, and using the tongs as a substitute for the bow.

97. Burlesque Music.

This, and such like vagaries, were frequently practised in the succeeding times; and they are neatly ridiculed in one of the papers belonging to the Spectator,[1] where the author mentions "a tavern keeper who amused his company with whistling of different tunes, which he performed by applying the edge of a case knife to his lips. Upon laying down the knife he took up a pair of clean tobacco pipes, and after having slid the small ends of them over a table in a most melodious trill, he fetched a tune out of them, whistling to them at the same time in concert. In short the tobacco pipes became musical pipes in the hands of our virtuoso, who," says the writer, "confessed ingenuously that he broke such quantities of pipes that he almost broke himself, before he brought this piece of music to any tolerable perfection."[2] This man also "played upon the frying-pan and gridiron, and declared he had layed down the tongs and key because it was unfashionable." I have heard an accompaniment to the violin exceedingly well performed with a rolling-pin and a salt-box, by a celebrated publican named Price, who kept the Green Man, formerly well known by the appellation of the Farthing Pye House, at the top of Portland Row, St. Mary-le-bone. I have also seen a fellow who used to frequent most of the public houses in and about the town, blow up his cheeks with his breath, and beat a tune upon them with his fists, which feat he seemed to perform with great facility. The butchers have a sort of rough music, made with marrow-bones and cleavers, which they usually bring forward at weddings; and in the Knave in Grain, a play first acted in 1640,[3] ringing of basons is mentioned. This music, or something like it, I believe, is represented by the engraving No. 57.

[1] Vol. v. No. 570.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Garrick's Col. old plays, G. vol. ii.

XII.—DANCING.

To what has been said upon this subject in a former chapter,[1] I shall here add a few words more, and consider it as performed for amusement only. In the middle ages dancing was reckoned among the genteel accomplishments necessary to be acquired by both sexes; and in the romances of those times, the character of a hero was incomplete unless he danced excellently.[2] The knights and the ladies are often represented dancing together, which in the MS. poem of Launfal, in the Cotton Collection,[3] is called playing:

The quene yede to the formeste ende,
Betweene Launfal and Gauweyn the hende,[4]
And after her ladyes bryght;
To daunce they wente alle yn same,
To see them playe hyt was fayr game,
A lady and a knyght;
They had menstrelles of moche honours,
Fydelers, sytolyrs, and trompetors,
And else hyt were unright.

The poet then tells us, they continued their amusement great part of a summer's day, that is, from the conclusion of dinner to the approach of night.

Dancing was constantly put in practice among the nobility upon days of festivity, and was countenanced by the example of the court. After the coronation dinner of Richard II., the remainder of the day was spent in the manner described by the foregoing poem; for the king, the prelates, the nobles, the knights, and the rest of the company, danced in Westminster Hall to the music of the minstrels.[5] Sir John Hawkins mentions a dance called pavon, from pavo, a peacock, which might have been proper upon such an occasion. "It is," says he, "a grave and majestic dance; the method of dancing it anciently was by gentlemen dressed with caps and swords, by those of the long robe in their gowns, by the peers in their mantles, and by the ladies in gowns with long trains, the motion whereof in dancing resembled that of a peacock."[6] Several of our monarchs are praised for their skill in dancing, and none of them more than

[1] Book iii. chap. v. p. 207.
[2] See the Introduction.
[3] Caligula, A 2. fol. 53.
[4] Polite, courteous.
[5] Rym. Fœd. tom. vii. p. 160. col. 2.
[6] Hist. Music, vol. iii. p. 383.

Henry VIII., who was peculiarly partial to this fashionable exercise. In his time, and in the reign of his daughter Elizabeth, the English, generally speaking, are said to have been good dancers; and this commendation is not denied to them even by foreign writers. Polydore Virgil praises the English for their skill in dancing,[1] and Hentzner says, "the English excell in danceing."[2]

XIII.—ANTIQUITY, &c. OF DANCING.

The example of the nobility was followed by the middling classes of the community; they again were imitated by their inferiors, who spent much of their leisure time in dancing, and especially upon holidays; which is noticed and condemned with great severity by the moral and religious writers, as we may find by turning to the Introduction. Dancing is there called a heathenish practice, and said to have been productive of filthy gestures, for which reason it is ranked with other wanton sports unfit to be exhibited. An old drama without date, but probably written early in the reign of Elizabeth, entitled A new Interlude and a Mery, of the Nature of the four Elements,[3] accuses the people at large, with "loving pryncypally disportes, as daunsynge, syngynge, toys, tryfuls, laughynge, and gestynge; for," adds the author, "connynge they set not by."[4] But Sebastian Brant, in his Ship of Fooles, is much more severe upon this subject. I shall give the passage as it is paraphrased by Barclay:[5]

> The priestes, and clerkes, to daunce have no shame;
> The frere, or monke in his frocke and cowle,
> Must daunce; and the doctor lepeth to play the foole.

He derives the origin of dancing from the Jews, when they worshipped the golden calf:

> Before this ydoll dauncing, both wife and man
> Despised God; thus dauncing first began.

The damsels of London, as far back as the twelfth century, spent the evenings on holidays in dancing before their masters' doors. Stow laments the abolition of this "open pastime," which he remembered to have seen practised in his youth,[6] and considered it not only as innocent in itself, but also as a preven-

[1] Hist. Angl. [2] Itinerary. [3] Garrick's Col. I, vol. iii.
[4] That is, learning they esteem not. First printed by Pynson, A. D. 1508.
[5] Stow died A. D. 1605, aged 80. Survey of London, by Strype, vol. i. p. 251.

tive to worse deeds "within doors," which he feared would follow the suppression. The country lasses perform this exercise upon the greens, where it is said they dance all their rustic measures, rounds, and jiggs.[1] We read also of dancing the Raye,[2] or Reye, as it is written by Chaucer, and which appears to have been a rustic dance, and probably the same as that now called the Hay, where they lay hold of hands, and dance round in a ring. A dance of this kind occurs several times in the Bodleian MS.,[3] dated A. D. 1344, whence many of the engravings which elucidate this work are taken. Chaucer speaks also of love-dances, and springs, as well known in his time;[4] but none of them are described. Of late years dancing is generally thought to be an essential part of a young female's education, and is commonly taught her at the boarding-school; and perhaps, when used with moderation, may not be improper. But some of the dances that the girls are permitted to perform are justly to be censured; among these may be ranked one called Hunt the Squirrel, in which, while the woman flies the man pursues her, but as soon as she turns, he runs away, and she is obliged to follow; and the Kissing-dance, the same, I suppose, as the Cushion-dance mentioned by Heywood at the commencement of the seventeenth century:[5] both of them are discommended in a paper of the Spectator.[6]

XIV.—SHOVEL-BOARD.

Among the domestic pastimes, playing at shovel-board claims a principal place. In former times the residences of the nobility, or the mansions of the opulent, were not thought to be complete without a shovel-board table; and this fashionable piece of furniture was usually stationed in the great hall.[7] The tables for this diversion were sometimes very expensive, owing to the great pains and labour bestowed upon their construction. "It is remarkable," says Dr. Plott, in his History of Staffordshire, "that in the hall at Chartley the shuffle-board table, though ten yards one foot and an inch long, is made up of about two hundred and sixty pieces, which are generally about eighteen

[1] A Woman Killed with Kindness. Trag. by Thomas Heywood, 3d edit. A. D. 1617. Garrick's Collect. E, vol. iv.
[2] See the Introduction.
[3] No. 264.
[4] House of Fame, book iii.
[5] See note [1], above.
[6] Vol. i. No. 76.
[7] See the Introduction.

inches long, some few only excepted, that are scarce a foot, which, being laid on longer boards for support underneath, are so accurately joined and glewed together, that no shuffle-board whatever is freer from rubbs or casting.—There is a joynt also in the shuffle-board at Madeley Manor exquisitely well done."

The length of these tables, if they be perfectly smooth and level, adds to their value in proportion to its increase; but they rarely exceed three feet or three feet and a half in width. At one end of the shovel-board there is a line drawn across parallel with the edge, and about three or four inches from it; at four feet distance from this line another is made, over which it is necessary for the weight to pass when it is thrown by the player, otherwise the go is not reckoned. The players stand at the end of the table, opposite to the two marks above mentioned, each of them having four flat weights of metal, which they shove from them one at a time alternately: and the judgment of the play is, to give sufficient impetus to the weight to carry it beyond the mark nearest to the edge of the board, which requires great nicety, for if it be too strongly impelled, so as to fall from the table, and there is nothing to prevent it, into a trough placed underneath for its reception, the throw is not counted; if it hangs over the edge, without falling, three are reckoned towards the player's game; if it lie between the line and the edge without hanging over, it tells for two; if on the line, and not up to it, but over the first line, it counts for one. The game, when two play, is generally eleven; but the number is extended when four or more are jointly concerned. I have seen a shovel-board-table at a low public-house in Benjamin-street, near Clerkenwell-green, which is about three feet in breadth and thirty-nine feet two inches in length, and said to be the longest at this time in London.

XV.—ANECDOTE OF PRINCE HENRY.

There certainly is not sufficient variety in this pastime to render it very attractive, but in point of exercise it is not inferior to any of the domestic amusements; for which reason it was practised by the nobility in former ages, when the weather would not admit of employment abroad. Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I., occasionally exercised himself in this manner, as the following anecdote may prove: it is recorded by one of

his attendants, who declares that he was present at the time, and that he has not attributed to him a single sentence not uttered by him in this or any other of the anecdotes related by him;[1] and therefore I will give it in the author's own words:—"Once when the prince was playing at shoffleboard, and in his play changed sundry pieces, his tutor, being desirous that even in trifles he should not be new-fangled, said to him, that he did ill to change so oft; and therewith took a piece in his hand, and saying that he would play well enough therewith without changing, threw the piece on the board; yet not so well but the prince, smileing thereat, said, Well throwne, Sir. Whereupon Master Newton telling him, that he would not strive with a prince at shoffleboard, he answered, You gownsmen should be best at such exercises, being not meete for those that are more stirring. Yes, quoth Master Newton, I am meete for whipping of boyes. And hereupon the prince answered, You need not vaunt of that which a ploughman or cartdriver can doe better than you. Yet I can doe more, said Master Newton, for I can governe foolish children. The prince respecting him, even in jesting, came from the further end of the table, and smiling, said, while he passed by him, Hee had neede be a wise man himselfe that could doe that."

XVI.—BILLIARDS.

This pastime, which in the present day has superseded the game of shovel-board, and is certainly a more elegant species of amusement, admits of more variety, and requires at least an equal degree of skill in the execution. The modern manner of playing at billiards, and the rules by which the pastime is regulated, are so generally known, that no enlargement upon the subject is necessary. The invention of this diversion is attributed to the French, and probably with justice; but at the same time I cannot help thinking it originated from an ancient game played with small bowls upon the ground; or indeed that it was, when first instituted, the same game transferred from the ground to the table.[2] At the commencement of the last century, the billiard-table was square, having only three pockets for the balls to run in, situated on one of the sides;

[1] MS. Harl. 6391.

[2] See p. 270, and the representation of the ground billiards by the engraving, No. 93.

that is, at each corner one, and the third between them. About the middle of the table was placed a small arch of iron, and in a right line, at a little distance from it, an upright cone called the king. A representation of the billiard-table, according to this description, may be found in the frontispiece to a little duodecimo treatise called The School of Recreation, published in 1710. At certain periods of the game it was necessary for the balls to be driven through the one and round the other, without beating either of them down; and their fall might easily be effected because they were not fastened to the table; this is called the French game; and much resembled the Italian method of playing, known in England by the name of Trucks, which also had its king at one end of the table. Billiards are first mentioned as an unlawful game towards the close of the last reign, when billiard-tables were forbidden to be kept in public-houses, under the penalty of ten pounds for every offence.[1]

XVII.—MISSISSIPI.

This is played upon a table made in the form of a parallelogram. It much resembles a modern billiard-table, excepting that, instead of pockets, it has a recess at one end, into which the balls may fall; and this recess is faced with a thin board equal in height to the ledge that surrounds the table; and in it are fifteen perforations, or small arches, every one of them surmounted by a number from one to fifteen inclusive, the highest being placed in the middle, and the others intermixed on either side. The players have four or six balls at pleasure. These balls, which are usually made of ivory, and distinguished from each other by their colour, some being red and some white, they cast alternately, one at a time, against the sides of the table, whence acquiring an angular direction, and rolling to the arches, they strike against the intervening parts, or pass by them. In the first instance the cast is of no use; in the second the value of the numbers affixed to the arches through which they run is placed to the score of the player; and he who first attains one hundred and twenty wins the game. This pastime is included in the statute above mentioned relating to billiards and the same penalty is imposed upon the publican who keeps a table in his house for the purpose of playing.

[1] By stat. 30 Geo. II.

XVIII.—THE ROCKS OF SCILLY.

This diversion requires a table oblong in its form, and curved at the top, which is more elevated than the bottom. There is a hollow trunk affixed to one side, which runs nearly the whole length of the table, and is open at both ends. The balls are put in singly at the bottom, and driven through it by the means of a round batoon of wood. When a ball quits the trunk it is impelled by its own gravity towards the lower part of the table, where there are arches similar to those upon the mississipi-table, and numbered in like manner; but it is frequently interrupted in its descent by wires inserted at different distances upon the table, which alter its direction, and often throw it entirely out of the proper track. The game is reckoned in the same manner as at mississipi, and the cast is void if the ball does not enter any of the holes.

XIX.—SHOVE-GROAT, &c.

Shove-groat, named also Slyp-groat, and Slide-thrift, are sports occasionally mentioned by the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and probably were analogous to the modern pastime called Justice Jervis, or Jarvis, which is confined to common pot-houses, and only practised by such as frequent the tap-rooms. It requires a parallelogram to be made with chalk, or by lines cut upon the middle of a table, about twelve or fourteen inches in breadth, and three or four feet in length: which is divided, latitudinally, into nine equal partitions, in every one of which is placed a figure, in regular succession from one to nine. Each of the players provides himself with a smooth halfpenny, which he places upon the edge of the table, and striking it with the palm of his hand, drives it towards the marks; and according to the value of the figure affixed to the partition wherein the halfpenny rests, his game is reckoned; which generally is stated at thirty-one, and must be made precisely: if it be exceeded, the player goes again for nine, which must also be brought exactly, or the turn is forfeited; and if the halfpenny rests upon any of the marks that separate the partitions, or overpasses the external boundaries, the go is void. It is also to be observed, that the players toss up to determine who shall go first, which is certainly a great advantage. Some

add a tenth partition, with the number ten, to the marks above mentioned; and then they play with four halfpence, which are considered as equivalent to so many cards at cribbage; and the game is counted, in like manner, by fifteens, sequences, pairs, and pairials, according to the numbers appertaining to the partitions occupied by the halfpence.

XX.—SWINGING.

This is a childish sport, in which the performer is seated upon the middle of a long rope, fastened at both ends, a little distance from each other, and the higher above his head the better. The rope we call the Swing, but formerly it was known by the name of Meritot, or Merry-trotter.[1] This simple pastime was not confined to the children, at least in the last century, but practised by grown persons of both sexes, and especially by the rustics. Hence Gay:

> On two near elms the slacken'd cord I hung,
> Now high, now low, my Blouzalinda swung.

It was also adopted at the watering-places by people of fashion, and the innovation is justly ridiculed in the Spectator.[2]

Of late years a machine has been introduced to answer the purpose of the swing. It consists of an axletree, with four or six double arms inserted into it, like the spokes of a large water-wheel; every pair of arms is connected at the extremities by a round rod of iron, of considerable thickness, and upon it a box is suspended, resembling the body of a post-chaise, which turns about and passes readily between the two spokes, in such a manner as to continue upright whatever may be the position of its supporters. These carriages usually contain two or three persons each, and being filled with passengers, if I may be allowed the term, the machine is put into action, when they are successively elevated and depressed by the rotatory motion. This ridiculous method of riding was in vogue for the space of two summers, and was exhibited at several places in the neighbourhood of London; and the places where the

[1] The first occurs in Chaucer; the second in the vocabulary called Orbis Sensualium Pictus, as translated by Hoole, chap. cxxxvi. In Latin it is called Oscillum, and thus described by an old author; Oscillum est genus ludi, &c. In English to this effect; Oscillum is a sort of game played with a rope depending from a beam, in which a boy or a girl being seated, is driven backwards and forwards. Speght's Glossary to Chaucer.

[2] Vol. viii. No. 496; and again No. 492 in the same volume.

machines were erected frequented by persons of both sexes, and by some whose situation in life, one might have thought, would have prevented their appearance in such a mixed, and generally speaking, vulgar company; but the charms of novelty may be pleaded in excuse for many inadvertencies.

The Grecian boys had a game called in Greek Ελκυστινδα,[3] which I have seen played by the youth of our own country; it was performed by the means of a rope passed through a hole made in a beam, and either end held by a boy, who pulls the rope, in his turn, with all his strength; and by this means both of them are alternately elevated from the ground.

XXI.—TITTER-TOTTER.

To the foregoing we may add another pastime well known with us by the younger part of the community, and called Titter-totter. It consists in simply laying one piece of timber across another, so as to be equipoised; and either end being occupied by a boy or a girl, they raise or depress themselves in turn. This sport was sometimes played by the rustic lads and lasses, as we find from Gay:

> Across the fallen oak the plank I laid,
> And myself pois'd against the tott'ring maid;
> High leap'd the plank, adown Buxoma fell, &c.

XXII.—SHUTTLE-COCK.

This a boyish sport of long standing. It is represented by the following engraving from a drawing on a MS. in the possession of Francis Douce, esq.

98. Shuttle-cock.—XIV. Century

[3] Eustadius ad Iliad. G.

It appears to have been a fashionable pastime among grown persons in the reign of James I. In the Two Maids of Moreclacke, a comedy printed in 1609, it is said, "To play at shuttlecock methinkes is the game now." And among the anecdotes related of prince Henry, son to James I., is the following: "His highness playing at shittle-cocke, with one farr taller than himself, and hittyng him by chance with the shittle-cock upon the forehead, 'This is,' quoth he, 'the encounter of David with Goliath.'"[1]

[1] Harl MS. 6391.

CHAPTER II.

I Sedentary Games.—II. Dice-playing;—Its Prevalency and bad Effects.—III Ancient Dice-box;—Anecdote relating to false Dice.—IV. Chess;—Its Antiquity.—V. The Morals of Chess.—VI. Early Chess-play in France and England.—VII. The Chess-board.—VIII. The Pieces, and their Form.—IX. The various Games of Chess.—X. Ancient Games similar to Chess.—XI. The Philosopher's Game.—XII. Draughts, French and Polish.—XIII. Merelles, or Nine Mens'. Morris.—XIV. Fox and Geese.—XV. The Solitary Game.—XVI. Backgammon, anciently called Tables;—The different Manners of playing at Tables.—XVII Backgammon, its former and present estimation.—XVIII. Domino.—XIX. Cards, when invented.—XX. Card-playing much practised.—XXI. Forbidden.—XXII. Censured by Poets.—XXIII. A specimen of ancient Cards.—XXIV. Games formerly played with Cards.—XXV. The Game of Goose—and of the Snake.—XXVI. Cross and Pile

I.—SEDENTARY GAMES.

This chapter is appropriated to sedentary games, and in treating upon most of them I am under the necessity of confining myself to very narrow limits. To attempt a minute investigation of their properties, to explain the different manners in which they have been played, or to produce all the regulations by which they have been governed, is absolutely incompatible with my present design. Instead, therefore, of following the various writers upon these subjects, whose opinions are rarely in unison, through the multiplicity of their arguments, I shall content myself by selecting such of them as appear to be most cogent, and be exceedingly brief in my own observations.

II.—DICE PLAY—ITS PREVALENCY AND BAD EFFECTS.

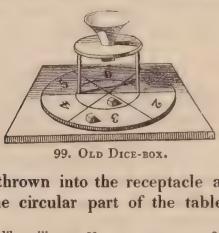
There is not, I believe, any species of amusement more ancient than dice-playing; none has been more universally prevalent, and, generally speaking, none is more pernicious in its consequences. It is the earliest, or at least one of the most early pastimes in use among the Grecians. Dice are said to have been invented, together with chess, by Palamedes, the son of Nauplius, king of Eubœa.[1] Others, agreeing to the time of the invention of dice, attribute it to a Greek soldier named Alea,

[1] Palamed. de Alea. lib. i. cap. 18.

and therefore say that the game was so denominated.[1] But Herodotus[2] attributes both dice and chess to the Lydians, a people of Asia; in which part of the world, it is most probable, they originated at some very remote but uncertain period. We have already seen that the ancient Germans, even in their state of barbarism, indulged the propensity for gambling with the dice to a degree of madness, not only staking all they were worth, but even their liberty, upon the chance of a throw, and submitted to slavery if fortune declared against them.[3] The Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans their descendants, were all of them greatly addicted to the same infatuating pastime. One would not, at first sight, imagine that the dice could afford any great variety of amusement, especially if they be abstractedly considered; and yet John of Salisbury, in the twelfth century, speaks of ten different games of dice then in use; but as he has only given us the names, their properties cannot be investigated. He calls it,[4] "The damnable art of dice-playing." Another author, contemporary with him, says, "The clergymen and bishops are fond of dice-playing."[5]

III.—ANCIENT DICE-BOX—ANECDOTE RELATING TO FALSE DICE.

The common method of throwing the dice is with a hollow cylinder of wood, called the dice-box, into which they are put, and thence, being first shaken together, thrown out upon the table; but in one of the prints which occur in the Vocabulary of Commenius,[6] we meet with a contrivance for playing with the dice that does not require them to be numbered upon their faces. This curious machine[7] is copied below.



99. Old Dice-box.

The dice are thrown into the receptacle at the top, whence they fall upon the circular part of the table below, which is

[1] Isidorus Originum, lib. xviii. cap. 60.
[2] Lib. i.
[3] See the Introduction.
[4] De Nug. Curialium, lib. i. cap. 5.
[5] Orderic. Vital. p. 550.
[6] Orbis Sensualium Pictus, translated by Hoole, 1658.
[7] In Latin, Pyrgus, Turricula, et Fritillus.

divided into six compartments, numbered as the dice usually are; and according to the value of the figures affixed to the compartments into which they fall the throw is estimated. Perhaps the inner part of the circle, with the apparatus above it, was so constructed as to move round with great rapidity when the dice were put into the tunnel. It would then be analogous to the E O tables of the present day, wherein a ball is used, and the game is determined by the letters E or O being marked upon the compartment into which it falls. The E O tables may have derived their origin from the above contrivance.

Dice-playing has been reprobated by the grave and judicious authors of this country for many centuries back; the legislature set its face against it at a very early period;[1] and in the succeeding statutes promulgated for the suppression of unlawful games, it is constantly particularised and strictly prohibited.

Supposing the play to be fair on either side, the chances upon the dice are equal to both parties; and the professed gamblers being well aware of this, will not trust to the determination of fortune, but have recourse to many nefarious arts to circumvent the unwary; hence we hear of loaded dice, and dice of the high cut. The former are dice made heavier on one side than the other by the insertion of a small portion of lead; and the latter may be known by the following anecdote in an anonymous MS. written about the reign of James I., and preserved in the Harleian Collection.[2] "Sir William Herbert, playing at dice with another gentleman, there rose some questions about a cast. Sir William's antagonist declared it was a four and a five; he as positively insisted that it was a five and six; the other then swore, with a bitter imprecation,[3] that it was as he had said: Sir William then replied, 'Thou art a perjured knave; for give me a sixpence, and if there be a four upon the dice, I will return you a thousand pounds;' at which the other was presently abashed, for indeed the dice were false, and of a high cut, without a four." The dice are usually made of bone or ivory, but sometimes of silver, and probably of other metals. The wife of the unfortunate Arden of Feversham, sent to Mosbie, her paramour, a pair of silver dice, in order to reconcile

[1] "Nec ludant ad aleas vel taxillos." Decret. Concil. Vigorn. A. D. 1240, directed to the clergy.

[2] No. 6395, Art. 69.

[3] "As false as dicers' oaths," is a proverbial expression, and used by Shakspeare in Hamlet, act iii. scene 4.

a disagreement that had subsisted between them, and occasioned his abstaining from her company.[1]

IV.—CHESS—ITS ANTIQUITY.

This noble, or, as it is frequently called, royal pastime, is said, by some authors, to have originated, together with dice-playing, at the siege of Troy; and the invention of both is attributed to Palamedes, the son of Nauplius, king of Eubœa;[2] others make Diomedes, and others again, Ulysses, the inventor of chess.[3] The honour has also been attributed to Ledo and Tyrrheno, two Grecians, and brothers, who being much pressed by hunger, sought to alleviate their bodily sufferings by diverting the mind.[4] None of these stories have any solid foundation for their support; and I am inclined to follow the opinion of Dr. Hyde and other learned authors, who readily agree that the pastime is of very remote antiquity, but think it first made its appearance in Asia.

V.—THE MORALS OF CHESS.

John de Vigney wrote a book which he called The Moralization of Chess, wherein he assures us that this game was invented by a philosopher named Xerxes in the reign of Evil Merodach, king of Babylon, and was made known to that monarch in order to engage his attention and correct his manners. "There are three reasons," says de Vigney, "which induced the philosopher to institute this new pastime: the first, to reclaim a wicked king; the second, to prevent idleness; and the third, practically to demonstrate the nature and necessity of nobleness." He then adds, "The game of chess passed from Chaldea into Greece, and thence diffused itself all over Europe." I have followed a MS. copy at the Museum in the Harleian Library.[5] Our countryman Chaucer, on what authority I know not, says it was

> —Athalus that made the game
> First of the chesse, so was his name.[6]

The Arabians and the Saracens, who are said to be admirable players at chess, have new-modelled the story of de Vigney

[1] An. 5 Ed. VI. A. D. 1551, Holinshed, vol. iii. p. 1062.
[2] Palamed. de Aleatoribus, cap. 18.
[3] Lepistre Othea, MS. "Ulixes fu un baron de Grece de grant soubtillete, et en temps du siege de Troye il trouva le gieu des esches," &c. Ulysses was a baron of Greece, exceedingly wise, and during the siege of Troy invented the game of chess. Harl. Lib. 4431.
[4] Ency. Brit. word Chess.
[5] No. 1275.
[6] Dream of Love.

and adapted it to their own country, changing the name of the philosopher from Xerxes to Sisa.[1]

VI.—EARLY CHESS-PLAY IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

It is impossible to say when the game of chess was first brought into this kingdom; but we have good reason to suppose it to have been well known here at least a century anterior to the Conquest, and it was then a favourite pastime with persons of the highest rank. Canute the Dane, who ascended the throne of England A. D. 1017, was partial to this pastime.[2] The following story is told of William, duke of Normandy, afterwards king of England. When a young man, he was invited to the court of the French king, and during his residence there, being one day engaged at chess with the king's eldest son, a dispute arose concerning the play; and William, exasperated at somewhat his antagonist had said, struck him with the chess-board; which obliged him to make a precipitate retreat from France, in order to avoid the consequences of so rash an action.[3] A similar circumstance is said by Leland to have happened in England.[4] John, the youngest son of Henry II., playing at chess one day with Fulco Guarine, a nobleman of Shropshire, a quarrel ensued, and John broke the head of Guarine with the chess-board, who in return struck the prince such a blow that he almost killed him. It seems, however, that Fulco found means of making his peace with king Henry, by whom he was knighted, with three of his brethren, a short time afterwards. John did not so easily forgive the affront; but, on the contrary, showed his resentment long after his accession to the English throne, by keeping him from the possession of Whittington Castle, to which he was the rightful heir.[5] It is also said of this monarch, that he was engaged at chess when the deputies from Rouen came to acquaint him that the city was besieged by Philip king of France, but he would not hear them out till he had finished the game. In like manner Charles I. was playing at chess when he was told that the final resolution of the Scots was to sell him to the parliament; and he was so little discomposed by the alarming intelligence, that he continued the game with great composure.[6] Several other instances to the same purpose might be produced, but these may suffice; and in truth, I know not what interpretation to put upon such

[1] Encyclop. Françoise, in voce Echecs. [2] See the Introduction.
[3] See Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy. [4] Collect. vol. i. p. 264.
[5] Ibid. [6] Ency. Brit. word Chess.

extraordinary conduct; it proves at least that the fascinating powers of this fashionable diversion are very extensive upon the minds of those who pursue it earnestly.

VII.—THE CHESS-BOARD.

The number of the pieces and the manner in which they are placed do not appear to have undergone much, if any, variation for several centuries. The following is the most ancient representation of the pastime that I have met with.

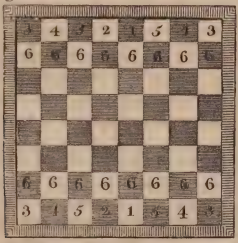
100. ANCIENT-CHESS-PLAY.

This engraving is from a drawing in a beautifully illuminated MS. preserved in the British Museum among the Harleian Collection.[1] This MS. was written at the close of the fourteenth century, and bears every mark of being the very copy presented to Isabel

[1] No. 4431.

of Bavaria, the queen of Charles VI. of France. Her portrait, very neatly finished, occurs twice, and that of the king her husband once. The author of this MS. makes Ulysses to be the inventor of chess; and the painting is intended to represent that chieftain engaged with some other Grecian hero who is come to visit and play the game with him, the two by-standers, I presume, are the umpires to decide the matter in case of any dispute.

The Cotton Library contains a MS. of the thirteenth century with the following:

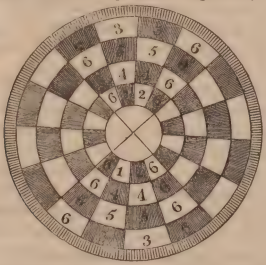


101. Chess-board.—XIV. Century.

In this representation is exhibited the manner of placing the pieces, which are thus called in Latin verse:

Miles et Alphinus, rex, roc, regina pedinus.

The same MS. supplies a perfect singularity:



102. Circular Chess-board.—XIV Century.

It will be observed that the pieces are also placed on the above board.

VIII.—CHESS-PIECES, AND THEIR FORM.

The names of the chess pieces, as they are given in the foregoing manuscript, are these: Rey—Reyne, or Ferce—Roc—Alfin—Chivaler—Poun:—that is, 1. The King—2. The Queen, or Ferce[1]—3. The Rock—4. The Alfin—5. The Knight—6. The Pawn. Their forms are annexed.

103. Chessmen.—XIV. Century.

In modern times the roc is corruptedly called a rook, but formerly it signified a rock or fortress, or rather, perhaps, the keeper of the fortress; the alfin was also denominated by the French fol, and with us an archer, and at last a bishop.

IX.—THE VARIOUS GAMES OF CHESS.

In a manuscript in the Royal Library,[2] written about the same time as that last mentioned, we find no less than forty-four different names given to so many games of chess, and some of them are played more ways than one, so that in the whole they may be said to amount to fifty-five; and under every title there are directions for playing the game, but I apprehend they would be of little use to a modern player. I shall, however, give the several denominations as they occur, with an attempt at a translation. If the learned reader should find that I have mistaken the meaning of any of these titles, which is very likely to be the case, he will consider the difficulty I had to encounter, and remember I give the translation with diffidence.

1. Guy de chivaler, played three ways—2. De dames—3. De damoyseles—4. De alfins, two ways—5. De anel—6. De covenant—7. De propre confusion—8. Mal assis—9. Cotidian, two ways—10. Poynt estraunge, two ways—11. Ky perde sey sauve—12. Ky ne doune ces ke il eyme, ne prendrant ke disire—13. Bien trove—14. Beal petit—15. Mieut vaut engyn ke force—16. Ky est larges est sages—17. Ky doune ganye—18. Ly enginous e ly coveytous—19. Covenaunt fet ley—20. Ve pres sen joyst ke loyns veyt—21. Meschief fet hom penser—22. La chace de chivaler—23. La chace de ferce et de chivaler

[1] In Chaucer's Dream this piece is called fers and feers.

[2] 13 A. xviii.

—24. Bien fort—25. Fol si prent—26. Ly envoyons—27. Le seon sey envoye—28. Le veyl conu—29. Le haut enprise—30. De cundut—31. Ky put se prenge—32. La batalie sans array—33. Le tret emble, two ways—34. Ly desperes—35. Ly marvelious, two ways—36. Ne poun ferce home fet—37. Muse vyleyn—38. De dames et de damoyceles—39. Fol si sey fie, two ways—40. Mal veysyn, two ways—41. Je mat de ferces—42. Flour de guys—43. La batalie de rokes—44. Double eschec.

1. The knights' game—2. The ladies' game—3. The damsels' game—4. The game of the alfins—5. The ring—6. The agreement—7. Self-confounded—8. Ill placed or bad enough—9. Day by day—10. The foreign point—11. The loser wins—12. He that gives not what he esteems, shall not take that he desires—13. Well found—14. Fair and small—15. Craft surpasses strength—16. He that is bountiful is wise—17. Who gives gains—18. Subtilty and covetousness—19. Agreement makes law—20. He sees his play at hand who sees it at a distance—21. Misfortunes make a man think—22. The chace of the knight—23. The chace of the queen and the knight—24. Very strong—25. He is a fool if he takes—26. The messengers—27. Sent by his own party—28. The old one known—29. The high place taken—30. Perhaps for conduit, managed or conducted—31. Take if you can—32. The battle without arrangement—33. The stolen blow—34. The desperates—35. The wonder—36. A pawn cannot make a queen—37. The clown's lurking place—38. The ladies and the damsels—39. A fool if he trusts—40. Bad neighbour—41. I mate the queen—42. The flower or beauty of the games—43. The battle of the rooks—44. Double chess.

X.—ANCIENT GAMES SIMILAR TO CHESS.

The ancient pastimes, if more than one be meant, which bear the names of ludus latrunculorum, ludus calculorum, et ludus scrupulorum, have been generally considered as similar to chess, if not precisely the same; but the authors of the Encyclopédie Françoise, assure us they did not bear any resemblance to it, at least in those essential parts of the game which distinguish it from all others; but were played with stones, shells, or counters. The ancients, we are told, used little stones, shells, and nuts, in making their calculations without the assistance of writing. These little stones were called by the Greeks ψηφοι, and calculi or scrupuli by the Romans; and such articles, it is

supposed, were employed by them in playing the games above mentioned. This method of reckoning passed from the Greeks to the Romans, but when luxury introduced itself at Rome, the stones and shells were laid aside, and counters made with ivory became their substitutes. If the foregoing observations be well founded, we may justly conclude that the ludus calculorum which Homer mentions as a pastime practised by his heroes, called in Greek πεττος or πεσσος, consisted in a certain arrangement and combination of numbers, every piece employed in the game being marked with an appropriate number, and probably might resemble a more modern pastime, which still retains the Greek name of Rithmomachia, from αριθμος, numerus, et μαχη, pugna, expressive of a battle with numbers, said by some to have been invented by Pythagoras,[1] and by others to be more ancient: with us it is called the Philosopher's Game, and seems indeed to have been well calculated for the diversion of soldiers, because it consists, not only in a contention for superiority by the skilful adjustment of the numbers, but in addition, allows the conqueror to triumph and erect his trophy in token of the victory; this part of the game, we are told, requires much judgment to perform with propriety, and if the player fails, his glories are but half achieved.

XI.—THE PHILOSOPHER'S GAME.

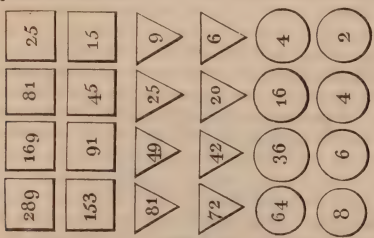
We have some account of the philosopher's game, but very loosely drawn up, in a manuscript in the Sloanian Library[2] at the British Museum. It is called, says the author, "a number fight," because in it men fight and strive together by the art of counting or numbering how one may take his adversary's king and erect a triumph upon the deficiency of his calculations. It is then said, "you may make your triumph as well with your enemy's men taken, as with your own not taken."

The board or table for playing this game is made in the form of a parallelogram just as long again as it is broad; it is divided into eight squares the narrow way, and extended to sixteen the other, and bears the resemblance of two chess-boards fastened together: the chequers in like manner being alternately black and white, and two persons only at one time can properly play the game; to either party is assigned twenty-four soldiers,

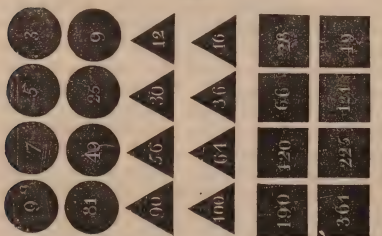
[1] And revived by Claud. Bruxer and others, A. D. 1514. Burton's Descrip. of Leicestershire, under Loughborough, p. 182.

[2] No. 451.

which constitute his army, (hoste, in the original,) and one of them is called the Pyramis or king: one third of these pieces are circular, which form two rows in the front of the army; one third are triangular, which are placed in the middle; and one third are square, which bring up the rear, and one of these situated in the fifth row is the Pyramis. The men belonging to the two parties are distinguished by being black and white, and every one of them is marked with an appropriate number. There were sometimes added to these numbers certain signs or algebraic figures, called cossical signings, which increased the intricacy of the game. The army that presents a front of even numbers is called the even hoste, and the other the odd hoste. The two armies at the commencement of the play are drawn up in the order represented below.[1]



104.



105. THE PHILOSOPHER'S GAME.

[1] [The white pieces above, No. 104, should be to the left, and be opposed by the blacks, No. 105, on the right; that is to say, were the engravings on the present page divided by the scissars, and placed as represented in Mr. Strutt's print, the round whites would be opposite to the round blacks.]

It was my wish to have subjoined a general outline of the method of playing the game, but the author is so exceedingly obscure in his phraseology, and negligent in his explanations, that I found it impossible to follow him with the least degree of satisfaction.[1] It is, however, certain, that the great object of each player is to take the king from his opponent, because he who succeeds may make his triumph and erect his trophy.

Burton, speaking of this pastime, in his Anatomy of Melancholy,[2] calls it the Philosophy Game, and thinks it "not convenient for students;" to which he adds, "the like I say of Dr. Fulke's Metromachia, and his Ouronomachia, with the rest of those intricate, astrological, and geometrical fictions, for such as are mathematically given, and other curious games." Dr. Fulke was a Cambridge man, and his book was printed at London 1566.

XII.—DRAUGHTS—FRENCH AND POLISH.

This pastime is well known in the present day; and I believe there are now in London as excellent draught-players as ever existed. Draughts, no doubt, is a modern invention, and easier to be learnt than chess, because it is not so intricate; for the pieces are of equal value till they become kings, and can only move one way, that is, diagonally; but, like chess, it depends entirely upon skill, and one false move frequently occasions the loss of the game. There are two methods of playing at draughts, the one commonly used in England, denominated the French Game, which is played upon a chess-board, and the other called the Polish Game, because, I presume, the first was invented in France and the latter in Poland. This requires a board with ten squares or chequers in each row, and twenty men, for so the pieces are usually named. The draught-man is called in French dame. The men in the Polish game can only move forwards as they do in the French game, but they have the privilege of taking backwards as well as forwards; and the king, if not opposed by two men close together, can move from one corner of the board to the other. The Polish game admits of most variety, and is, in my opinion, infinitely the best; but it is little known in this country, and rarely played, except by

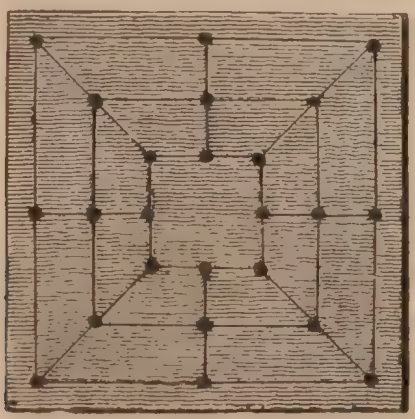
[1] The printed edition of Claud. Bruxer, who revived this play, in which no doubt it is fully explained, I have not seen. It is said to have been published by Hen. Stephanus, A. D. 1514.

[2] Part ii. sect. 2. mem. 4.

foreigners. We have a recent publication upon the French game of draughts, which fully explains the nature of the pastime, and points out most of the important moves, published by Sturges, who, I am told, is an excellent player.

XIII.—MERELLES—NINE MENS' MORRIS.

Merelles, or, as it was formerly called in England, nine mens' morris, and also five-penny morris, is a game of some antiquity. Cotgrave describes it as a boyish game, and says it was played here commonly with stones, but in France with pawns, or men, made on purpose, and they were termed merelles; hence the pastime itself received that denomination. It was certainly much used by the shepherds formerly, and continues to be used by them, and other rustics, to the present hour. But it is very far from being confined to the practice of boys and girls. The form of the merelle-table, and the lines upon it, as it appeared in the fourteenth century, is here represented.



106. Merelles.

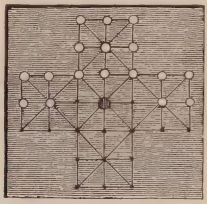
These lines have not been varied. The black spots at every angle and intersection of the lines are the places for the men to be laid upon. The men are different in form or colour for distinction sake; and from the moving these men backwards or forwards, as though they were dancing a morris, I suppose the pastime received the appellation of nine mens' morris; but why it should have been called five-penny morris, I do not know. The manner of playing is briefly this: two persons, having each of them nine pieces, or men, lay them down alternately, one by one, upon the spots; and the business of either party is to prevent his antagonist from placing three of his

pieces so as to form a row of three, without the intervention of an opponent piece. If a row be formed, he that made it is at liberty to take up one of his competitor's pieces from any part he thinks most to his own advantage; excepting he has made a row, which must not be touched if he have another piece upon the board that is not a component part of that row. When all the pieces are laid down, they are played backwards and forwards, in any direction that the lines run, but only can move from one spot to another at one time: he that takes off all his antagonist's pieces is the conqueror. The rustics, when they have not materials at hand to make a table, cut the lines in the same form upon the ground, and make a small hole for every dot. They then collect, as above mentioned, stones of different forms or colours for the pieces, and play the game by depositing them in the holes in the same manner that they are set over the dots upon the table. Hence Shakspeare, describing the effects of a wet and stormy season, says,

> The folds stand empty in the drowned field,
> And crows are fatted with the murrain flock,
> The nine mens' morris is filled up with mud.

XIV.—FOX AND GEESE.

This is a game somewhat resembling that of merelles in the manner the pieces are moved, but in other respects, as well as in the form of the table, it differs materially; the intersection and angles are more numerous, and the dots of course increased, which adds to the number of the moves.



107. FOX AND GEESE.

To play this game there are seventeen pieces, called geese, which are placed as we see them upon the engraving, and the

fox in the middle, distinguished either by his size or difference of colour, as here, for instance, he is black. The business of the game is to shut the fox up, so that he cannot move. All the pieces have the power to move from one spot to another, in the direction of the right lines, but cannot pass over two spots at one time. It is to be observed, that this board is sometimes made with holes bored through it, where the dots are made, and pegs equal to the number of geese put into them, and the fox is distinguished by being larger and taller than the rest. The geese are not permitted to take the fox if he stands close to them, but the fox may take a goose, in like case, if the spot behind it be unoccupied, or not guarded by another goose; and if all be taken, or the number so reduced that the fox cannot be blocked, the game is won. The great deficiency of this game is, that the fox must inevitably be blocked if the geese are played by a skilful hand; for which reason, I am told, of late some players have added another fox; but this I have not seen.

XV.—THE SOLITARY GAME.

This is so denominated because it is played by one person only. It is said to have been invented by an unfortunate man who was several years kept in solitary confinement at the Bastile in Paris. The board for this pastime is of a circular form, and perforated with holes at half an inch distance from each other, to the amount of fifty or sixty. A certain number of pegs are then fitted to these holes, but not enough to fill them all; and the manner of playing the game is, to pass one of the pegs over another into a hole that is unoccupied, taking the peg so passed from the board, and to continue doing so till all the pegs but one are taken away; which is an operation much more difficult to perform than any one could readily imagine who had not made the attempt. It must be remembered that only one peg can be passed over at a time, and that no peg can be put over another, unless it stands close to it without an intervening hole.

XVI.—BACKGAMMON, OR TABLES.

The game of chess, and most of the pastimes derived from it, depend entirely upon the skill of the players, and afford no

chance of success to an indifferent one if his antagonist be possessed of more knowledge in moving the pieces than himself. Therefore, in order to bring two players of unequal talents nearer to a level, other diversions were invented, in which both chance and skill were united, as we see they are in the game at tables, which in Latin is called tabularum ludus, and in French tables. Hence the following line in the romance of Parise la Duchesse:

Puis aprist il as tables et eschas joier;

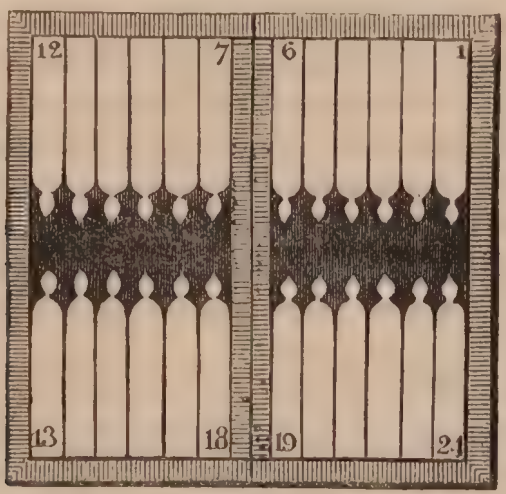
Then he learned to play at tables and at chess.[1] The game of tables is better known at present by the name of Backgammon. This pastime is said to have been discovered about the tenth century,[2] and the name derived from two Welsh words signifying "little battle." But I trust, as before observed, that the derivation may be found nearer home. The words are perfectly Saxon, as Bac, or Bæc, and ȝamen, that is, Back Game; so denominated because the performance consists in the players bringing their men back from their antagonists' tables into their own; or because the pieces are sometimes taken up and obliged to go back, that is, re-enter at the table they came from. The ancient form of the backgammon-table is represented by the annexed engraving:

108. TABLES.—XIII. CENTURY.

The original of the engraving occurs in a beautifully illuminated manuscript in the Harleian Collection.[3] The table, as here delineated, is not divided in the middle, but the points,

[1] Du Cange, Gloss. in voce Tabula.
[2] See the Introduction.
[3] No. 1527.

on either side, are contained in a single compartment. Annexed is the representation of a backgammon-table at least a century more modern.



109. TABLES.—XIV. CENTURY.

In this the division is fairly made, but the points are not distinguished by different colours, according to the present, and indeed more ancient usage. The writer of the latter manuscript, which is in the King's Library,[1] says, "There are many methods of playing at the tables with the dice. The first of these, and the longest, is called the English game, Ludus Anglicorum, which is thus performed: he who sits on the side of the board marked 1—12 has fifteen men (homines) in the part marked 24, and he who sits on the side marked 13—24 has a like number of men in the part 1. They play with three dice, or else with two, allowing always (semper, that is, at every throw) six for a third die. Then he who is seated at 1—12 must bring all his men placed at 24 through the partitions (paginas), from 24 to 19, from 18 to 13, and from 12 to 7, into the division 6—1, and then bear them off; his opponent must do the same from 1 to 7, thence to 12, thence to 18, into the compartment 19—24; and he who first bears off all his men is conqueror." Here we may observe, that the most material circumstances in which the game differed, at this remote period, from the present method of playing it, are, first, in having three dice instead of two, or reckoning a certain number for the third; and secondly, in placing all the men within the antagonist's table, which, if I do not mistake the author, must be put upon his ace point. But to go on: "There is," says he, "another game upon the tables

[1] No. 13, A. xviii.

called Paume Caric, which is played with two dice, and requires four players, that is, two on either side; or six, and then three are opposed to three." He then speaks of a third game, called "Ludus Lumbardorum, the Game of Lombardy, and thus played: he who sits on the side marked 13—24 has his men at 6, and his antagonist has his men at 19;" which is changing the ace point in the English game for the size point: and this alteration probably shortened the game. He then mentions the five following variations by name only; the Imperial game, the Provincial game, the games called Baralie, Mylys, and Faylis.

XVII.—BACKGAMMON—ITS FORMER AND PRESENT ESTIMATION.

At the commencement of the last century backgammon was a very favourite amusement, and pursued at leisure times by most persons of opulence, and especially by the clergy, which occasioned dean Swift, when writing to a friend of his in the country, sarcastically to ask the following question: "In what esteem are you with the vicar of the parish; can you play with him at backgammon?" But of late years this pastime is become unfashionable, and of course it is not often practised. The tables, indeed, are frequently enough to be met with in the country mansions; but upon examination you will generally find the men deficient, the dice lost, or some other cause to render them useless. Backgammon is certainly a diversion by no means fitted for company, which cards are made to accommodate in a more extensive manner; and therefore it is no wonder they have gained the ascendancy.

XVIII.—DOMINO.

This is a very childish sport, imported from France a few years back, and could have nothing but the novelty to recommend it to the notice of grown persons in this country. It consists of twenty-eight small oblong and flat pieces of ivory or bone, and all of the same size and shape. The back of every piece is plain, and sometimes black; the face is white, divided into two parts by a line in the middle, and marked with a double number, or with two different numbers, or with a number and a blank, and one of them is a double blank. The numbers are the same as those upon the dice, from one to six inclusive.

When two play, the whole of the pieces, which are ridiculously enough called cards, are hustled about the table with their faces downwards, and each of them draw seven or nine, according to agreement, and the remaining pieces are undiscovered until the hand is played, which is thus performed: the right of first playing being cut for, he who obtains it lays down one of his pieces, and the other is to match one of the numbers marked upon it with a similar number marked upon a piece of his own, which he lays close to it; the other then matches one of the open numbers in like manner; and thus they continue alternately to lay down their pieces as long as they can be matched; and he who first gets rid of all his pieces wins the game: but if it so happen, as it often does, that neither of them have exhausted their pieces, nor can match the open numbers on the table, they then discover what remains on both sides, and he whose pieces contain the fewest spots obtains the victory. Sometimes four play, in which case they deal out six cards to each, leaving only four upon the table, and then play on in rotation.

XIX.—CARDS—WHEN INVENTED.

The general opinion respecting the origin of playing-cards is, that they were first made for the amusement of Charles VI. of France, at the time he was afflicted with a mental derangement, which commenced in 1392, and continued for several years. The proof of this supposition depends upon an article in the treasury registers belonging to that monarch, which states that a payment of fifty-six sols was made to Jacquemin Gringonneur, painter, for three packs of cards gilded and painted with divers colours and different devices, to be carried to the king for his diversion.[1] If it be granted, and I see no reason why it should not, that this entry alludes to playing-cards, the consequences that have been deduced from it, do not necessarily follow; I mean, that these cards were the first that were made, or that Gringonneur was the inventor of them; it by no means precludes the probability of cards having been previously used in France, but simply states that those made by him were gilt

[1] The whole passage runs thus: "Donne a Jacqemin Gringonneur, peintre, pour trois jeux de cartes, à or et à diverse couleurs de plusieurs devises, pour porter vers le dit Seigneur Roy pour son abatement, cinquante-six sol Parisis." St. Foix, Essais sur Paris, tom. i. p. 341.

and diversified with devices in variegated colours, the better to amuse the unfortunate monarch.

Some, allowing that Gringonneur was the first maker of playing-cards, place the invention in the reign of Charles V., upon the authority of Jean de Saintre, who was page to that monarch; he mentions card-playing in his chronicle; for he was an author. The words he uses are these: "Et vous qui etes noyseux joueux de cartes et de des.—And you who are contentious play at cards and at dice."[1] This would be sufficient evidence for the existence of cards before the ascension of Charles VI. to the throne of France, if it could be proved that the page did not survive his master; but, on the other hand, if he did, they may equally be applied to the amusements of the succeeding reign.

XX.—CARD-PLAYING MUCH PRACTISED.

A prohibitory edict against the usage of cards was made in Spain considerably anterior to any that have been produced in France. In Spain, as early as A. D. 1387, John I., king of Castile, in an edict, forbade playing of cards and dice in his dominions. The provost of Paris, January 22, A. D. 1397, published an ordinance, prohibiting the manufacturing part of the people from playing at tennice, dice, cards, &c.[2] which has inclined several modern writers upon this subject to refer the invention of cards from France to Spain; and the names of some of the cards, as well as of many of the most ancient games, being evidently derived from the Spanish language, are justly considered as strong corroborating arguments in favour of such an opinion. Such, for instance, as primero and the principal card in the game quinola; ombre and the cards spadill, manill, basto, punto, matador, quadrille, a species of ombre, &c. The suit of clubs upon the Spanish cards is not the trefoils as with us, but positively clubs, or cudgels, of which we retain the name, though we have lost the figures; the original name is bastos. The spades are swords, called in Spain espadas; in this instance we retain the name and some faint resemblance of the figure.[3]

[1] Chronic. de Petit Jean de Saintre, cap. 15.

[2] Bullet, p. 18. See also Mr. Gough on Card-playing, Archæologia, vol. viii. p. 152 et seq.

[3] See the hon. Daines Barrington on Card-playing, Archæologia, vol. viii. p. 135 et seq.

A very intelligent writer upon the origin of engraving, baron Heineken, asserts that playing-cards were invented in Germany, where they were used towards the latter end of the fourteenth century; but his reasons are by no means conclusive. He says they were known there as early as the year 1376.[1]

An author of our own country produces a passage cited from a wardrobe computus made in 1377, the sixth year of Edward I., which mentions a game entitled, "the four kings;"[2] and hence with some degree of probability he conjectures that the use of playing-cards was then known in England, which is a much earlier period than any that has been assigned by the foreign authors. It is the opinion of several learned writers well acquainted with Asiatic history, that cards were used in the eastern parts of the world long before they found their way into Europe.[3] If this position be granted, when we recollect that Edward I. before his accession to the throne resided nearly five years in Syria, it will be natural enough to suppose that he might have learned the game of "the four kings" in that country, and introduced it at court upon his return to England. An objection, which indeed at first sight seems to be a very powerful one, has been raised in opposition to this conjecture: it is founded upon the total silence of every kind of authority respecting the subject of card-playing from the time that the above-mentioned entry was made to 1464, an early period in the reign of Edward IV., including an interval of one hundred and eighty-six years. An omission so general, it is thought, would not have taken place, if the words contained in that record alluded to the usage of playing-cards. A game introduced by a monarch could not fail of becoming fashionable; and if it continued to be practised in after times, must in all probability have been mentioned occasionally in conjunction with other pastimes then prevalent. But this silence is by no means a proof that the game of "the four kings" was not played with cards, nor that cards did not continue to be used during the whole of the above-mentioned interval in the higher circles, though not perhaps with such

[1] Heineken, Idée générale d'une Collection des Estampes, pp. 237, 249.

[2] "Waltero Sturton, ad opus Regis, ad ludendum ad quatuor reges," viii s. v d Anstis, History of the Garter.

[3] Warton says it seems probable that the Arabians were the inventors of cards, which they communicated to the Constantinopolitan Greeks. Hist. Eng. Poetry, vol. ii. p. 316. Indeed it is very likely they were brought into the western parts of Europe during the crusades.

abuses as were afterwards practised, and which excited the reprehension of the moral and religious writers. Besides, at the time that cards were first introduced, they were drawn and painted by the hand without the assistance of a stamp or plate; it follows of course that much time was required to complete a set or pack of cards; and the price they bore no doubt was adequate to the labour bestowed upon them, which necessarily must have enhanced their value beyond the purchase of the under classes of the people. For this reason it is, I presume, that card-playing, though it might have been known in England, was not much practised until such time as inferior sets of cards, proportionably cheap, were produced for the use of the commonalty, which seems to have been the case when Edward IV. ascended the throne, for in 1463, early in his reign, an act was established on a petition from the card-makers of the city of London, prohibiting the importation of playing-cards;[1] and soon after that period card-playing became a very general pastime.

The increasing demand for these objects of amusement, it is said, suggested the idea of cutting the outlines appropriated to the different suits upon separate blocks of wood and stamping them upon the cards;[2] the intermediate spaces between the outlines were filled up with various colours laid on by the hand. This expeditious method of producing cards reduced the price of them, so that they might readily be purchased by almost every class of persons: the common usage of cards was soon productive of serious evils, which all the exertions of the legislative power have not been able to eradicate.[3]

Another argument against the great antiquity of playing-cards is drawn from the want of paper proper for their fabrication. We certainly have no reason to believe that paper made with linen rags was produced in Europe before the middle of the fourteenth century, and even then the art of paper-making does not appear to have been carried to any great perfection. It is also granted that paper is the most proper material we know of for the manufacturing of cards; but it will not therefore follow

[1] Henry's Hist. Brit. vol. v. book v. cap. vii.

[2] And hence originated the noble and beneficial art of printing. These printing blocks are traced back to the year 1423, and probably were produced at a much earlier period. Idée générale d'une Collect. des Estampes, ut sup.

[3] An old Scotch poem, cited by Warton, speaks of cards and dice as fashionable amusements, but of evil tendency. Hist. Poet. vol. ii. p. 316.

that they could not possibly be made with any other; and if we admit of any other, the objection will fall to the ground.

XXI.—CARD-PLAYING FORBIDDEN.

Card-playing appears to have been a very fashionable court amusement in the reign of Henry VII. In an account of money disbursed for the use of that monarch, an entry is made of one hundred shillings paid at one time to him for the purpose of playing at cards.[1] The princess Margaret, his daughter, previous to her marriage with James IV., king of Scotland, understood the use of cards. She played with her intended husband at Harbottle Castle; the celebration of their nuptials took place A. D. 1503, she being then only fourteen years of age.[2] Catherine of Spain, the consort of prince Arthur, afterwards married to Henry VIII. his brother, is said in her youth to have been well acquainted with the art of embroidery and other works of the needle proper for ladies to know, and expert in various courtly pastimes; and she could play at "tables, tick-tacke or gleeke, with cardis and dyce."[3]

The universality of card-playing in the reign of this monarch is evident from a prohibitory statute being necessary to prevent apprentices from using cards except in the Christmas holidays, and then only in their masters' houses.[4] Agreeable to this privilege, Stow, speaking of the customs at London, says, "from All-Hallows eve to the day following Candlemas-day, there was, among other sports, playing at cards for counters, nails, and points, in every house, more for pastime than for gain."[5] But this moderation, I apprehend, was by no means general, for several contemporary writers are exceedingly severe in their reflections upon the usage of cards, which they rank with dice, and consider both as destructive to morality and good order.[6]

[1] Extract from a MS. in the Remembrancer's Office, dated December 26, an. 9 Hen. VII.

[2] Addit. to Leland's Collect. vol. iii. p. 285.

[3] Sir Will. Forrest. See Warton's Hist. Poet. vol. iii. sect. 36, p. 311.

[4] The same statute forbade any householder to permit card-playing in his house under the penalty of six shillings and eight pence for every offence. Stat. an. 11 Hen. VII. cap. 2.

[5] Stow's Survey. By points he means narrow ribbons with which one part of the dress was attached to the other.

[6] Especially Stephen Gossor, in his School of Abuse, printed A. D 1579; and John Northbrooke, in a Treatise against Dicing, Card-playing, Dancing, &c. without date, but apparently published soon after the former.

XXII.—CARD-PLAYING CENSURED BY POETS.

Henry VIII. preferred the sports of the field, and such pastimes as promoted exercise, to sedentary amusements; his attachment to dice he gave up at an early part of his life; and I do not recollect that Hall the historian, who is so minute in describing the various sources of entertainment pursued by this athletic monarch, ever mentions cards as one of them: I am, indeed, well aware that Shakspeare speaks of his "playing at primero with the duke of Suffolk;" and it is very possible, that the poet might have had some authority for so doing. Sir William Forrest, who wrote at the close of his reign, and presented a poetical treatise entitled The Poesye of Princelye Practice, to his son Edward VI., speaks therein of the pastimes proper for the amusement of a monarch, and says, he may after dinner indulge himself with music, or otherwise

> Att tables, chesse or cardis awhile himselfe repose;

but adds, that "syttynge pastymes are seldom found good, especially in the day-time;" he therefore advises the pursuit of those that afforded both air and exercise.[1] In another part of his poem he speaks in strong terms against the practice of card-playing, as productive of idleness, especially when it is followed by the labouring people, in places of common resort:

> Att ale howse too sit, at mack or at mall,
> Tables or dyce, or that cardis men call,
> Or what oother game owte of season dwe,
> Let them be punysched without all rescue.[2]

Forrest's manuscript is in the Royal Library,[3] and at the commencement of the poem he is represented presenting it to king Edward VI. The author of an old morality, entitled Hycke Scorner,[4] written probably some time before this poem by Forrest, has placed the card-players with such company as evinces he had not a good opinion of their morals:

> Walkers by nyght, with gret murderers,
> Overthwarte with gyle, and joly carders.

[1] Cap. ix. [2] Cap. xix. [3] No. 17, D. iij.
[4] Black letter, without date, printed by Wynkyn de Worde. Garrick's Collection of Old Plays.

And also in Barclay's translation of the Ship of Fooles, by Sebastian Brant, printed by Pynson in 1508, are these lines:

> The damnable lust of cardes and of dice,
> And other games, prohibite by the lawe.

It is not, however, necessary to produce any further evidence from the writers of the former times to prove the evil tendency of card-playing, when it is indulged beyond the limits of discretion. Too many instances of ruin and destruction may be brought forward in the present day to convince us of the justness of their censures.

XXIII.—ANCIENT CARDS.

The early specimens of playing-cards that have been produced, differ very little in their form from those now used. This form is certainly the most convenient for the purposes assigned to them, and has been most generally adopted. We shall, however, prove, that it was subject to variation. The figures and devices that constitute the different suits of the cards seem anciently to have depended upon the taste and invention of the card-makers; and they did not bear the least resemblance to those in present use.

It has been observed, that outlines made upon blocks of wood were stamped upon the cards, and afterwards filled up by the hand; but, soon after the invention of engraving upon copper, the devices were produced by the graver, and sufficiently finished, so that the impressions did not require any assistance from the pencil. It appears also, that the best artists of the time were employed for this purpose. I am exceedingly happy to have it in my power to lay before my readers a curious specimen of ancient engraved cards, in the possession of Francis Douce, esq., with whose permission they are added to this work. I have chosen one from each of the different suits, namely, the King of Columbines, the Queen of Rabbits, the Knave of Pinks, and the Ace of Roses; which answered to the spades, the clubs, the diamonds, and the hearts, of the moderns. The annexed engravings are of the same size as the originals. They are nearly square, and, originally, I have no doubt but they were perfectly so.

110. The King of Columbines.

111. The Queen of Rabbits.

Ancient Cards.

112. The Knave of Pinks.

113. The Ace of Roses.

Ancient Cards.

Upon the other cards belonging to the pack the number of the flowers or animals answered to the pips at present, with the addition of numeral figures corresponding with the devices, that they might be readily distinguished without the trouble of counting them. The originals of these cards, I make no doubt, are the work of Martin Schoen, a well-known and justly celebrated German artist; and Mr. Douce is in possession of part of another set, which evidently appear to be the production of Israel Van Mecheln, who was contemporary with Schoen. Mecheln outlived Martin Schoen a considerable time; the latter died in 1486, and the former in 1523. The earliest print that I have seen by Mecheln with a date is 1480; but he practised the art of engraving some time prior to that period.

A set or pack of cards, but not equally ancient with those above mentioned, were in the possession of Dr. Stukeley: the four suits upon them consisted of bells, of hearts, of leaves, and of acorns; by which, the doctor imagined, were represented the four orders of men among us: the bells are such as are usually tied to the legs of the hawks, and denoted the nobility; the hearts were intended for the ecclesiastics; the leaves alluded to the gentry, who possess lands, woods, manors, and parks; the acorns signified the farmers, peasants, woodmen, park-keepers, and hunters. But this definition will, I trust, be generally considered as a mere effusion of fancy. It is remarkable that in these cards there are neither queens nor aces; but the former are supplied by knights, the latter have no substitute. Dr. Stukeley's cards were purchased at his sale by Mr. Tuttet, and again at his sale by Mr. Gough, in whose possession they now remain.[1] The last gentleman has given a full description of them in a paper upon the subject of card-playing, in the Archæologia.[2] The figured cards, by us denominated court cards, were formerly called coat cards; and originally, I conceive, the name implied coated figures, that is, men and women who wore coats, in contradistinction to the other devices of flowers and animals not of the human species. The pack or set of cards, in the old plays, is continually called a pair of cards; which has suggested the idea that anciently two packs of cards were used, a custom common enough at present in playing at quadrille; one pack being laid by the side of the player who is to deal the next time. But this supposition rests entirely upon

[1] [In 1800.] [2] Vol vii. p. 152 et seq.

the application of the term itself, without any other kind of proof whatever: and seems, indeed, to be entirely overturned by a passage in a very old play entitled The longer thou livest the more Foole thou art; in which Idleness desires Moros the clown to look at "his booke," and shows him "a paire of cardes."[1] In a comedy called A Woman killed with Kindness, a pair of cards and counters to play with are mentioned.

XXIV.—GAMES FORMERLY PLAYED WITH CARDS.

Primero is reckoned among the most ancient games of cards known to have been played in England; each player, we are told, had four cards dealt to him one by one; the seven was the highest card in point of number that he could avail himself of, which counted for twenty-one; the six counted for sixteen, the five for fifteen, and the ace for the same; but the two, the three, and the four, for their respective points only. The knave of hearts was commonly fixed upon for the quinola, which the player might make what card or suit he thought proper; if the cards were of different suits the highest number won the primero, if they were all of one colour he that held them won the flush.[2]

Prime, mentioned by Sir John Harrington in his satirical description of the fashionable court games, published in 1615, the hon. Daines Barrington thinks was not the same as primero; he has not, however, specified the difference between them. The poet says,

> The first game was the best, when free from crime,
> The courtly gamesters all were in their prime.

Trump. A game thus denominated in the old plays is perhaps of equal antiquity with primero, and at the latter end of the sixteenth century was very common among the lower classes of people. Dame Chat, in Gammer Gurton's Needle, says to Dicon, "we be set at trump, man, hard by the fire, thou shalt set upon the king;" and afterwards to her maid,

> Come hither, Dol; Dol, sit down and play this game,
> And as thou sawest me do, see thou do even the same;
> There are five trumps besides the queen, the hindmost thou shalt find her
> Take heed of Sim Glover's wife, she hath an eye behind her.[3]

[1] Garrick's Collect. vol. i. 18.

[2] Hon. Daines Barrington on Card-playing, Archæologia, vol. viii.

[3] This play is said to have been first acted A. D. 1561; the edition I quote from is dated 1575.

Trump is thought to have borne some resemblance to the modern game of whist.

Gresco is mentioned in conjunction with primero in the comedy of Eastward Hoe;[1] "he would play his hundred pounds at gresco and primero as familiarly as any bright piece of crimson of them all."

Sir John Harrington, after having mentioned prime, proceeds to enumerate the games that succeeded in the following manner:

> The second game was post,[2] until with posting
> They paid so fast, 'twas time to leave their bosting.
> Then thirdly follow'd heaving of the maw,
> A game without civility or law,
> An odious play, and yet in court oft seen,
> A saucy knave to trump both king and queen.
> Then follow'd lodam.[3]——
> Now noddy follow'd next.—
> The last game now in use is banckerout,[4]
> Which will be plaid at still I stand in doubt,
> Until lavalta turne the wheele of time
> And makes it come aboute again to prime.

Gleek is mentioned with primero in Green's Tu quoque, where one of the characters proposes to play at twelve-penny gleek, but the other insists upon making it for a crown at least.

Coeval with gleek we find Mount Saint, or more properly Cent, in Spanish Cientos, or hundred, the number of points that win the game. Thus in a play by Lewis Machin, called the Dumb Knight, the third edition printed in 1608, the queen says of this game, "the name is taken from hundreds;" and afterwards to Philocles, "you are a double game, and I am no less; there is an hundred, and all cards made but one knave."[5] Mount Saint was played by counting, and probably did not differ much from Picquet, or picket, as it was formerly written, which is said to have been played with counters, and to have been introduced in France about the middle of the seventeenth century. Picket is mentioned in Flora's Vagaries, printed in 1670.

New Cut is mentioned in A Woman killed with Kindness, a play written by Thomas Heywood, third edition, 1617, where one of the characters says, "if you will play at new cut, I am soonest hitter of any one heere for a wager."

[1] Written by Jonson, Chapman, and Marlow, and printed A. D. 1605.
[2] Called also post and pair.
[3] Called Saint Lodam by Mr. Barrington, I know not upon what authority, Archæologia, ut supra.
[4] Perhaps the same with bankafalet mentioned in the Complete Gamester.
[5] See also Mr. Barrington, ut supra.

KNAVE OUT OF DOORS occurs also in the same play, together with RUFF, which is proposed to be played with honours; double ruff, and English ruff, with honours, are mentioned in the Complete Gamester, published in 1674, and is distinguished from French ruff.

LANSQUENET is a French game, and took its name from the Lansquenets, or light German troops, employed by the kings of France in the fifteenth century.[1]

BASSET, said by Dr. Johnson to have been invented at Venice, was a very fashionable game towards the close of the seventeenth century.

OMBRE was brought into England by Catherine of Portugal, queen to Charles II.

QUADRILLE, a modern game, bears great analogy to ombre, with the addition of a fourth player, which is certainly a great improvement.

WHIST, or as it was formerly written, whisk, is a game now held in high estimation. At the commencement of last century, according to Swift, it was a favourite pastime with clergymen, who played the game with swabbers; these were certain cards by which the holder was entitled to part of the stake, in the same manner that the claim is made for the aces at quadrille. Whist, in its present state of improvement, may properly be considered as a modern game, and was not, says the hon. Daines Barrington, played upon principles till about fifty years ago, when it was much studied by a set of gentlemen who frequented the Crown coffee-house in Bedford-row. Mr. Barrington's paper on card-playing in the Archæologia, was published in 1787, and the author says that the first mention he finds of the game of whist is in the Beaux Stratagem, a comedy by Geo. Farquhar, pub. A. D. 1707. He also thinks that whist might have originated from the old game of trump. Cotgrave explains the French word triomphe in this manner; the game called ruff, or trump; also the ruff, or trump in it.

To the games already mentioned we may add the following: *Put*, and the *High Game; Plain Dealing, Wit and Reason, Costly Colours, Five Cards, Bone Ace*,[2] *Queen Nazareen, Lanterloo, Penneech, Art of Memory, Beast, Cribbage*, and *All Fours*. Nearly all these games may be found in a small

[1] Bullet, Recherches Hist. sur Cartes à jouer, p. 152.

[2] Perhaps this may be the same as the game called Ace of Hearts, prohibited with all lotteries by cards and dice, an. 12 Geo. II. cap. 38, sect. 2.

book entitled the Complete Gamester, with the directions how to play them. *Crimp*, mentioned in the Spectator,[1] I take to be a game played with the cards, and one might be led to think the same of *Roulet* by the wording of the act 18 Geo. II. by which it is prohibited. The words are, "And whereas a certain pernicious game, called Roulet, or Roly-poly, is daily practised," the act then directs "that no place shall be kept for playing at the said game of roulet, or roly-poly, or any other game with cards or dice," &c.

XXV.—THE GAME OF GOOSE—AND OF THE SNAKE.

In addition to the pastimes mentioned in the preceding pages, I shall produce two or three more; and they are such as require no skill in the performance, but depend entirely upon chance for the determination of the contest.

We have a childish diversion usually introduced at Christmas time, called the Game of Goose. This game may be played by two persons; but it will readily admit of many more; it originated, I believe, in Germany, and is well calculated to make children ready at reckoning the produce of two given numbers. The table for playing at goose is usually an impression from a copper-plate pasted upon a cartoon about the size of a sheet almanack, and divided into sixty-two small compartments arranged in a spiral form, with a large open space in the midst marked with the number sixty-three; the lesser compartments have singly an appropriate number from one to sixty-two inclusive, beginning at the outmost extremity of the spiral lines. At the commencement of the play, every one of the competitors puts a stake into the space at No. 63. There are also different forfeitures in the course of the game that are added, and the whole belongs to the winner. At No. 5 is a bridge which claims a forfeit at passing; at 19, an alehouse where a forfeit is exacted and to stop two throws; at 30, a fountain where you pay for washing; at 42, a labyrinth which carries you back to 23; at 52, the prison where you must rest until relieved by another casting the same throw; at 58, the grave whence you begin the game again; and at 61, the goblet where you pay for tasting.[2] The game is played with two dice, and every player throws in his turn as he sits at the table: he must have a counter or some

[1] Vol. v. No. 323.

[2] See Des Lust und Spiel Hauses, published at Bude 1680.

other small mark which he can distinguish from the marks of his antagonists, and according to the amount of the two numbers thrown upon the dice he places his mark; that is to say, if he throws a four and a five, which amount to nine, he places his mark at nine upon the table, moving it the next throw as many numbers forward as the dice permit him, and so on until the game be completed, namely, when the number sixty-three is made exactly; all above it the player reckons back, and then throws again in his turn. If the second thrower at the beginning of the game casts the same number as the first, he takes up his piece, and the first player is obliged to begin the game again. If the same thing happens in the middle of the game, the first player goes back to the place the last came from. It is called the game of the goose, because at every fourth and fifth compartment in succession a goose is depicted, and if the cast thrown by the player falls upon a goose, he moves forward double the number of his throw.

We have also the Game of Snake, and the more modern Game of Matrimony, with others of the like kind; formed upon the same plan as that of the goose, but none of them, according to my opinion, are in the least improved by the variations.

XXVI.—CROSS AND PILE.

Cross and pile, or with us head or tail, is a silly pastime well enough known among the lowest and most vulgar classes of the community, and to whom it is at present very properly confined; formerly, however, it held a higher rank, and was introduced at the court. Edward II. was partial to this and such like frivolous diversions, and spent much of his time in the pursuit of them. In one of his wardrobe rolls we meet with the following entries: "Item, paid to Henry, the king's barber, for money which he lent to the king to play at cross and pile, five shillings. Item, paid to Pires Barnard, usher of the king's chamber, money which he lent the king, and which he lost at cross and pile; to Monsieur Robert Wattewille eightpence."[1]

A halfpenny is generally now used in playing this game; but any other coin with a head impressed on one side will answer the purpose: the reverse of the head being called the tail without respect to the figure upon it, and the same if it was blank. Anciently the English coins were stamped on one side

[1] Antiq. Repert. vol. ii. p. 58.

with a cross. One person tosses the halfpenny up and the other calls at pleasure head or tail; if his call lies uppermost when the halfpenny descends and rests upon the ground, he wins; and if on the contrary, of course he loses. Cross and pile is evidently derived from a pastime called Ostrachinda, Οστρακινδα, known in ancient times to the Grecian boys, and practised by them upon various occasions; having procured a shell, it was seared over with pitch on one side for distinction sake, and the other side was left white; a boy tossed up this shell and his antagonist called white or bl k, Νυξ et ημερα, (literally night and day), as he thought proper, and his success was determined by the white or black part of the shell being uppermost.

CHAPTER III.

I. The Lord of Misrule said to be peculiar to the English.—II. A Court Officer.—III. The Master of the King's Revels.—IV. The Lord of Misrule and his Conduct reprobated.—V. The King of Christmas—of the Cockneys—VI. A King of Christmas at Norwich.—VII. The King of the Bean.—VIII. Whence originated.—IX. The Festival of Fools.—X. The Boy Bishop.—XI. The Fool-Plough.—XII. Easter Games.—XIII. Shrove-Tuesday.—XIV. Hock-Tuesday.—XV. May-Games.—XVI. The Lord and Lady of the May.—XVII. Grand May-Game at Greenwich.—XVIII. Royal May-Game at Shooter's-hill.—XIX. May Milk-Maids.—XX. May Festival of the Chimney Sweepers.—XXI. Whitsun-Games.—XXII. The Vigil of Saint John the Baptist, how kept.—XXIII. Its supposed origin.—XXIV. Setting of the Midsummer Watch.—XXV. Processions on Saint Clement's and Saint Catherine's day.—XXVI. Wassails.—XXVII. Sheep-shearing and Harvest-home.—XXVIII. Wakes.—XXIX. Sunday Festivals.—XXX. Church Ales.—XXXI. Fairs, and their diversions and abuses.—XXXII. Bonfires.—XXXIII. Illuminations.—XXXIV. Fireworks.—XXXV. London Fireworks.—XXXVI. Fireworks on Tower-hill, at Public Gardens, and in Pageants.

I.—THE LORD OF MISRULE PECULIAR TO ENGLAND.

It is said of the English, that formerly they were remarkable for the manner in which they celebrated the festival of Christmas; at which season they admitted variety of sports and pastimes not known, or little practised in other countries.[1] The mock prince, or lord of misrule, whose reign extended through the greater part of the holidays, is particularly remarked by foreign writers, who consider him as a personage rarely to be met with out of England;[2] and, two or three centuries back, perhaps this observation might be consistent with the truth; but I trust we shall upon due examination be ready to conclude, that anciently this frolicksome monarch was well known upon the continent, where he probably received his first honours. In this kingdom his power and his dignities suffered no diminution, but on the contrary were established by royal authority, and continued after they had ceased to exist elsewhere. But even with us his government has been extinct for many years, and his name and his offices are nearly forgotten. In some great families, and also sometimes at court, this officer was called

[1] See Introduction. [2] Polydore Vergil de Rerum Invent. lib. v. cap. 2.

the Abbot of Misrule. Leland says, "This Christmas[1] I saw no disguiseings at court, and right few playes; but there was an abbot of misrule that made much sport, and did right well his office."[2] In Scotland he was called the Abbot of Unreason, and prohibited there in 1555 by the parliament.[3] No doubt in many instances the privileges allowed to this merry despot were abused, and not unfrequently productive of immorality; the institution itself, even if we view it in its most favourable light, is puerile and ridiculous, adapted to the ages of ignorance, when more rational amusements were not known, or at least not fashionable.

II.—THE LORD OF MISRULE A COURT OFFICER.

Holingshed, speaking of Christmas, calls it, "What time there is alwayes one appointed to make sporte at courte called commonly lorde of misrule, whose office is not unknowne to such as have bene brought up in noblemens' houses and among great housekeepers, which use liberal feasting in the season."[4] Again: "At the feast of Christmas," says Stow, "in the king's court wherever he chanced to reside, there was appointed a lord of misrule, or master of merry disports; the same merry fellow made his appearance at the house of every nobleman and person of distinction, and among the rest the lord mayor of London and the sheriffs had severally of them their lord of misrule, ever contending, without quarrel or offence, who should make the rarest pastimes to delight the beholders; this pageant potentate began his rule at All-hallow eve, and continued the same till the morrow after the Feast of the Purification; in which space there were fine and subtle disguisings, masks, and mummeries."[5]

III.—THE MASTER OF THE KING'S REVELS.

In the fifth year of Edward VI., at Christmas time, a gentleman named George Ferrers, who was a lawyer, a poet, and an historian, was appointed by the council to bear this office; "and he," says Holingshed, "being of better calling than commonly his predecessors had been before, received all his commissions and warrauntes by the name of master of the kinge's pastimes; which gentleman so well supplied his office, both of shew

[1] An. 4 Hen. VII. A. D. 1489.
[2] Collect. vol. iii. Append. p. 256.
[3] See Warton's Hist. Eng. Poetry, vol. i. p. 381. Chron. of Brit. vol. iii. fol 1317.
[4] Survey of London, p. 79.

of sundry sights, and devises of rare invention, and in act of divers interludes, and matters of pastime, played by persons, as not only satisfied the common sorte, but also were verie well liked and allowed by the council, and others of skill in lyke pastimes; but best by the young king himselfe, as appeared by his princely liberalitie in rewarding that service." It was certainly an act of much policy in the council to appoint so judicious and respectable an officer for the department at this time, and was done in order to counteract by shows and pastimes the discontent that prevailed, and divert the mind of the king from reflecting too deeply upon the condemnation of his uncle the duke of Somerset.

IV.—THE LORD OF MISRULE—AND HIS CONDUCT REPROBATED.

This master of merry disports was not confined to the court, nor to the houses of the opulent, he was also elected in various parishes, where, indeed, his reign seems to have been of shorter date. Philip Stubbs, who lived at the close of the sixteenth century, places this whimsical personage, with his followers, in a very degrading point of view.[1] I shall give the passage in the author's own words, and leave the reader to comment upon them. "First of all, the wilde heades of the parish flocking togither, chuse them a graund captaine of mischiefe, whom they innoble with the title of Lord of Misrule; and him they crowne with great solemnity, and adopt for their king. This king annoynted chooseth forth twentie, fourty, threescore, or an hundred lustie guttes, like to himself, to waite upon his lordly majesty, and to guarde his noble person. Then every one of these men he inveseth with his liveries of greene, yellow, or some other light wanton colour, and as though they were not gawdy ynough, they bedecke themselves with scarffes, ribbons, and laces, hanged all over with gold ringes, pretious stones, and other jewels. This done, they tie aboute either legge twentie or fourtie belles, with riche handkerchiefes in their handes, and sometimes laide acrosse over their shoulders and neckes, borrowed, for the most part, of their pretie mopsies and loving Bessies. Thus all thinges set in order, then have they their hobby horses, their dragons, and other antiques, together

[1] Anatomie of Abuses, printed A. D. 1595.

with their baudie pipers, and thundring drummers, to strike up the devil's daunce with all. Then march this heathen company towards the church, their pypers pyping, their drummers thundring, their stumpes dauncing, their belles jyngling, their handkerchiefes fluttering aboute their heades like madde men, their hobbie horses and other monsters skirmishing amongst the throng: and in this sorte they go to the church, though the minister be at prayer or preaching, dauncing and singing like devils incarnate, with such a confused noise that no man can heare his owne voyce. Then the foolish people they looke, they stare, they laugh, they fleere, and mount upon the formes and pewes to see these goodly pageants solemnized. Then after this, aboute the church they go againe and againe, and so fourthe into the churche yard, where they have commonly their sommer-halls, their bowers, arbours, and banquetting-houses set up, wherein they feast, banquet, and daunce all that day, and paradventure all that night too; and thus these terrestrial furies spend the sabbath day. Then, for the further innobling of this honourable lardane, lord I should say, they have certaine papers wherein is painted some babelerie[1] or other of imagerie worke, and these they call my Lord of Misrule's badges or cognizances. These they give to every one that will give them money to maintain them in this their heathenish devilrie; and who will not show himself buxome to them and give them money, they shall be mocked and flouted shamefully; yea, and many times carried upon a cowlstaffe, and dived over heade and eares in water, or otherwise most horribly abused. And so besotted are some, that they not only give them money, but weare their badges or cognizances in their hates or cappes openly. Another sorte of fantasticall fooles bring to these helhounds, the Lord of Misrule and his complices, some bread, some good ale, some new cheese, some old cheese, some custardes, some cracknels, some cakes, some flaunes, some tartes, some creame, some meat, some one thing, and some another." Hence it should seem the Lord of Misrule was sometimes president over the summer sports. The author has distinguished this pageantry from the May-games, the wakes, and the church-ales, of which, I should otherwise have thought, it might have been a component part.

[1] Childish, trifling.

V.—THE KING OF CHRISTMAS.

The society belonging to Lincoln's-inn had anciently an officer chosen at this season, who was honoured with the title of king of Christmas-day, because he presided in the hall upon that day. This temporary potentate had a marshal and a steward to attend upon him. The marshal, in the absence of the monarch, was permitted to assume his state, and upon New-Year's-day he sat as king in the hall when the master of the revels, during the time of dining, supplied the marshal's place. Upon Childermas-day they had another officer, denominated the King of the Cockneys, who also presided on the day of his appointment, and had his inferior officers to wait upon him.[1]

VI.—A KING OF CHRISTMAS AT NORWICH.

In the history of Norfolk[2] mention is made of a pageant exhibited at Norwich upon a Shrove Tuesday, which happened in the month of March, "when one rode through the street, having his horse trapped with tyn foyle and other nyse disgysynges, crowned as Kyng of Christmas, in token that the season should end with the twelve moneths of the year; and afore[3] hym went yche[4] moneth dysgysyd as the season requiryd."

VII.—THE KING OF THE BEAN.

The dignified persons above mentioned were, I presume, upon an equal footing with the King of the Bean, whose reign commenced upon the vigil of the Epiphany, or upon the day itself. We read that, some time back, "it was a common Christmas gambol in both our universities, and continued," at the commencement of the last century, "to be usaal in other places, to give the name of king or queen to that person whose extraordinary good luck it was to hit upon that part of a divided cake which was honoured above the others by having a bean in it."[5] The reader will readily trace the vestige of this custom, though somewhat differently managed, and without the bean, in the present method of drawing, as it is called, for king and queen upon Twelfth-day. I will not pretend to say in

[1] Dugdale's Origines Juridiciales, fol. 247. [2] By Blomfield, vol. ii. p. 3.
[3] Before. [4] Each. [5] Bourne's Antiq. Vulg. chap. xvii.

ancient times, for the title is by no means of recent date, that the election of this monarch, the King of the Bean, depended entirely upon the decision of fortune: the words of an old kalendar belonging to the Romish church[1] seem to favour a contrary opinion; they are to this effect: On the fifth of January, the vigil of the Epiphany, the Kings of the Bean are created;[2] and on the sixth the feast of the kings shall be held, and also of the queen; and let the banqueting be continued for many days. At court, in the eighth year of Edward III., this majestic title was conferred upon one of the king's minstrels, as we find by an entry in a computus so dated, which states that sixty shillings were given by the king, upon the day of the Epiphany, to Regan the trumpeter and his associates, the court minstrels, in the name of King of the Bean.[3]

VIII.—WHENCE THESE MOCK DIGNITIES WERE DERIVED.

Selden asserts,[4] and in my opinion with great justice, that all these whimsical transpositions of dignity are derived from the ancient Saturnalia, or Feasts of Saturn, when the masters waited upon their servants, who were honoured with mock titles, and permitted to assume the state and deportment of their lords. These fooleries were exceedingly popular, and continued to be practised long after the establishment of Christianity, in defiance of the threatenings and the remonstrances of the clergy, who, finding it impossible to divert the stream of vulgar prejudice permitted them to be exercised, but changed the primitive object of devotion; so that the same unhallowed orgies, which had disgraced the worship of a heathen deity, were dedicated, as it was called, to the service of the true God, and sanctioned by the appellation of a Christian institution. From this polluted stock branched out variety of unseemly and immoral sports; but none of them more daringly impious and outrageous to common sense, than the Festival of Fools, in which the most sacred rites and ceremonies of the church were turned into ridicule, and the ecclesiastics themselves participated in the abominable profanations. The following outlines of this absurd diversion will no doubt be thought sufficient.

[1] Cited by Mr. Brand, notes to Bourne, p. 205.
[2] In nomine Regis de Fabâ. MS. Cott. Nero, C. viii.
[3] Reges Fabis creantur
[4] Table Talk, London, 1689, title Christmas.

IX.—THE FESTIVAL OF FOOLS.

In each of the cathedral churches there was a bishop, or an archbishop of fools, elected; and in the churches immediately dependent upon the papal see a pope of fools. These mock pontiffs had usually a proper suit of ecclesiastics who attended upon them, and assisted at the divine service, most of them attired in ridiculous dresses resembling pantomimical players and buffoons; they were accompanied by large crowds of the laity, some being disguised with masks of a monstrous fashion, and others having their faces smutted; in one instance to frighten the beholders, and in the other to excite their laughter: and some, again, assuming the habits of females, practised all the wanton airs of the loosest and most abandoned of the sex. During the divine service this motley crowd were not contented with singing of indecent songs in the choir, but some of them ate, and drank, and played at dice upon the altar, by the side of the priest who celebrated the mass. After the service they put filth into the censers, and ran about the church, leaping, dancing, laughing, singing, breaking obscene jests, and exposing themselves in the most unseemly attitudes with shameless impudence.[1] Another part of these ridiculous ceremonies was, to shave the precentor of fools upon a stage erected before the church, in the presence of the populace; and during the operation, he amused them with lewd and vulgar discourses,[2] accompanied by actions equally reprehensible. The bishop, or the pope of fools, performed the divine service habited in the pontifical garments, and gave his benediction to the people before they quitted the church. He was afterwards seated in an open carriage, and drawn about to the different parts of the town, attended by a large train of ecclesiastics and laymen promiscuously mingled together; and many of the most profligate of the latter assumed clerical habits in order to give their impious fooleries the greater effect; they had also with them carts filled with ordure, which they threw occasionally upon the populace assembled to see the procession.[3] These spectacles were always exhibited at Christmas-time, or near to it, but not confined to one particular day. It was some-

[1] Circular Letter addressed to the Clergy of France, by P. de Blois, published in 1444.

[2] Register de Eglise de S. Stephen de Dijon, 1494. [3] P. de Blois, ut supra.

times on Christmas-day, and on the feasts of St. Stephen, St. John, the Innocents, the Circumcision, the Epiphany, &c.[1] When the ceremony took place upon St. Stephen's-day, they sang, as part of the mass, a burlesque composition called the Prose of the Ass, or the Fool's Prose. It was performed by a double choir, and at intervals, in place of a burden, they imitated the braying of an ass. Upon the festival of St. John the Evangelist they had another arrangement of ludicrous sentences, denominated the Prose of the Ox, equally reprehensible.[2] These exhibitions were highly relished by the populace at large, and crept into the monasteries and nunneries, where they were practised by the female votaries of religion.

X.—THE BOY-BISHOP

Grotesque ceremonies, something similar to those above mentioned, certainly took place in England; but probably they were not carried to that extent of impiety, nor so grossly offensive to decency. We had a king of the fools, but his office was suppressed at an early period, and not, that I remember, revived in the succeeding times. A Rex Stultorum, in Beverley church, was prohibited in 1391.[3] The election and the investment of the boy-bishop was certainly derived from the festival of fools. It does not appear at what period this idle ceremony was first established, but probably it was ancient, at least we can trace it back to the fourteenth century. In all the collegiate churches, at the feast of St. Nicholas, or of the Holy Innocents, and frequently at both, it was customary for one of the children of the choir, completely apparelled in the episcopal vestments, with a mitre and crosier, to bear the title and state of a bishop. He exacted a ceremonial obedience from his fellows, who being dressed like priests, took possession of the church, and performed all the ceremonies and offices which might have been celebrated by a bishop and his prebendaries: Warton, and the author of the manuscript he has followed, add, "the mass excepted;" but the proclamation of Henry VIII. for the abolition of this custom, proves they did "singe masse." Colet, dean of St. Paul's, though he was "a wise and good man," countenanced this idle farce; and in the

[1] Encyclopédie Françoise, article Fête des Fous.
[2] Theoph. Raynaud.
[3] Dugdale's Monast. vol. iii. Appendix vii.

statutes for his school[1] at St. Paul's, expressly orders that the scholars "shall, every Childermas, that is, Innocents-day, come to Paule's churche, and hear the Childe Byshop's[2] sermon, and after be at hygh masse, and each of them offer a penny to the childe byshop; and with them the maisters and surveyors of the schole."[3] To this Warton adds, "I take this opportunity of intimating that the custom at Eton of going ad montem, originated from the ancient and popular practice of these theatrical processions in collegiate bodies.[4] After having performed the divine service, the boy-bishop and his associates went about to different parts of the town, and visited the religious houses, collecting money. These ceremonies and processions were formally abrogated by proclamation from the king and council, in 1542, the thirty-third year of Henry VIII.; the concluding clause of the ordinance runs thus: "Whereas heretofore dyvers and many superstitious and chyldysh observances have been used, and yet to this day are observed and kept in many and sundry places of this realm upon St. Nicholas, St. Catherines, St. Clements, and Holy Innocents, and such like holydaies; children[5] be strangelie decked and apparayled to counterfeit priests, bishops, and women, and so ledde with songs and dances from house to house, blessing the people, and gathering of money; and boyes do singe masse, and preache in the pulpits, with such other unfittinge and inconvenient usages, which tend rather to derysyon than enie true glorie to God, or honor of his sayntes."[6] This idle pageantry was revived by his daughter Mary; and in the second year of her reign an edict, dated November 13, 1554, was issued from the bishop of London to all the clergy of his diocese, to have a boy-bishop in procession.[7] The year following, "the child bishop, of Paules church, with his company," were admitted into the queen's privy chamber, where he sang before her on Saint Nicholas-day and upon Holy Innocents-day.[8] Again the next year, says Strype, "on Saint Nicholas-even, Saint Nicholas, that is, a boy habited like a bishop in pontificalibus,[9] went abroad in most parts of London, singing after the old fashion; and was received with many ignorant but well-disposed

[1] A. D. 1512. Warton, Hist. Eng. Poetry, vol. i. p. 248; and vol. iii. p. 390.
[2] Of St. Paul's cathedral. [3] Knight's Life of Colet, p. 362.
[4] Hist. Poet. ut supra. [5] Boys. [6] MS. Cott. Tiberius B. i.
[7] Strype's Eccl. Mem. vol. iii. chap. 39. p. 310.
[8] Ibid. chap. 35. p. 202. Ibid. chap. 39. p. 310.

people into their houses, and had as much good cheer as ever was wont to be had before." After the death of Mary this silly mummery was totally discontinued. We may observe, that most of the churches in which these mock ceremonies were performed, had dresses and ornaments proper for the occasion, and suited to the size of the wearers, but in every other respect resembling those appropriated to the real dignitaries of the church; hence it is we frequently meet with entries of diminutive habits and ornaments in the church inventories, as una mitra parva cum petris pro episcopo puerorum, that is, a small mitre with jewels for the bishop of the boys.[1]

XI.—THE FOOL-PLOUGH.

Cards, dice, tables, and most other games prohibited by the public statutes at other seasons of the year, were tolerated during the Christmas holidays, as well as disguisements and mummings; and in some parts of the kingdom vestiges of these customs are to be found to the present day. "In the north," says Mr. Brand,[2] at Christmas time "fool-plough goes about; a pageant that consists of a number of sword-dancers dragging a plough about with music, and one, or sometimes two of them attired in a very antic dress; as the Bessy in the grotesque habit of an old woman, and the Fool almost covered with skins, a hairy cap on his head, and the tail of some animal hanging down his back: the office of one of these characters is to go about rattling a box among the spectators of the dance to collect their little donations; and it is remarkable that in some places where this pageant is retained, they plough up the soil before any house where they receive no reward." The pageant and the dance seem to be a composition of gleanings of several obsolete customs followed anciently. The Fool and the Bessy are plainly fragments of the festival of fools.[3]

The fool-plough was, perhaps, the yule-plough; it is also called the white-plough, because the gallant young men that compose the pageant appear to be dressed in their shirts without coats or waistcoats; upon which great numbers of ribbands folded into roses are loosely stitched. Mr. Brand adds, "it appears to be a very airy habit for this cold season, but they have warm waistcoats under it."

[1] Invent. York Cathedral. See also Dugdale's Hist. of St. Paul's, p. 265.
[2] Additions to Bourne's Antiq. Vulg. chap. 14. p. 175. [3] Ibid.

In general Plough-Monday, or the first Monday after Twelfth-day, is the Ploughmen's Holiday, when they beg for the plough-money to drink. In Essex and Suffolk, at Shrove-tide or upon Shrove-Tuesday, after the confession, it was usual for the farmer to permit his ploughman to go to the barn blindfolded, and "thresh the fat hen," saying, "if you can kill her then give it thy men; and go you and dine on fritters and pancakes."[1]

XII.—EASTER GAMES.

In the islands of Scilly it was customary of late years at this season for "the young people to exercise a sort of gallantry called goose dancing, when the maidens are dressed up for young men, and the young men for maidens; thus disguised they visit their neighbours in companies, where they dance, and make jokes upon what has happened in the island; when every one is humorously told their own without offence being taken: by this sort of sport, according to yearly custom and toleration, there is a spirit of wit and drollery kept up among the people. When the music and dancing is done, they are treated with liquor, and then they go to the next house of entertainment."[2]

XIII.—SHROVE-TUESDAY, &c.

Cock-fighting, and throwing at cocks on Shrove-Tuesday, and playing at hand-ball for tansy-cakes at Easter-tide, have been already mentioned, with other trifling sports which are comprised under their appropriate heads, and need not to be repeated; but, according to Stow, the week before Easter, "great shows were made by bringing a twisted tree, or with, as they termed it, into the king's palace, and into the houses of the nobility and gentry." I am not certain whether the author means that this custom was confined to the city of London, or whether it extended to other parts of England.[3] It is now obsolete.

XIV.—HOKE-DAY, OR HOCK-DAY.

This popular holiday, Quindena Paschæ, mentioned by Matthew Paris and other ancient writers, was usually kept on the

[1] See Warton's Hist. Eng. Poet. vol. iii. p. 307.
[2] Heath's Islands of Scilly, 1750, p. 125.
[3] Survey of Lond. p. 79.

Tuesday[1] following the second Sunday after Easter-day; and distinguished, according to John Rouse,[2] by various sportive pastimes, in which the towns-people, divided into parties, were accustomed to draw each other with ropes. Spelman is more definite, and tells us, "they consisted in the men and women binding each other, and especially the women the men," and hence it was called Binding-Tuesday.[3] Cowel informs us that it was customary in several manors in Hampshire for "the men to hock the women on the Monday, and the women the men upon the Tuesday; that is, on that day the women in merriment stop the ways with ropes and pull the passengers to them, desiring something to be laid out in pious uses in order to obtain their freedom."[4] Such are the general outlines of this singular institution, and the pens of several able writers have been employed in attempting to investigate its origin.[5] Some think it was held in commemoration of the massacre of the Danes, in the reign of Ethelred the Unready, on Saint Brice's-day;[6] others, that it was in remembrance of the death of Hardicanute, which happened on Tuesday the 8th of June, 1041, by which event the English were delivered from the intolerant government of the Danes: and this opinion appears to be most probable. The binding part of the ceremony might naturally refer to the abject state of slavery in which the wretched Saxons were held by their imperious lords; and the donations for "pious uses," may be considered as tacit acknowledgments of gratitude to heaven for freeing the nation from its bondage. In the churchwarden's accounts for the parish of Lambeth for the years 1515 and 1516, are several entries of hock monies received from the men and the women for the church service. And here we may observe, that the contributions collected by the fair sex exceeded those made by the men.[7]

Hock-day was generally observed as lately as the sixteenth century. We learn from Spelman that it was not totally discontinued in his time. Dr. Plott, who makes Monday the principal day, has noticed some vestiges of it at the distance of fift years, but now it is totally abolished.

[1] M. Paris Hist. Ang. sub anno 1152.
[2] Or Ross, the Warwickshire historian. Edita Hearne, p. 105.
[3] Gloss. under the title Hock-day. [4] Hist. Hampshire.
[5] See a Memoir by the Rev. Mr. Jenne, Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 224
[6] A. D. 1002. But the time of the year does not agree. St. Brice's-day is th. 13th of November.
[7] Memoir, ut supra.

XV.—MAY-GAMES.

The celebration of the May-games, at which we have only glanced in a former part of the work,[1] will require some enlargement in this chapter. "On the calends or first of May," says Bourne,[2] "commonly called May-day, the juvenile part of both sexes were wont to rise a little after midnight and walk to some neighbouring wood, accompanied with music and blowing of horns, where they break down branches from the trees, and adorn them with nosegays and crowns of flowers; when this is done, they return with their booty homewards about the rising of the sun, and make their doors and windows to triumph with their flowery spoils; and the after part of the day is chiefly spent in dancing round a tall poll, which is called a May-poll; and being placed in a convenient part of the village, stands there, as it were, consecrated to the Goddess of Flowers, without the least violation being offered to it in the whole circle of the year."

This custom, no doubt, is a relic of one more ancient, practised by the Heathens, who observed the last four days in April, and the first of May, in honour of the goddess Flora. An old Romish calendar, cited by Mr. Brand, says, on the 30th of April, the boys go out to seek May-trees, "Maii arbores a pueris exquirunter." Some consider the May-pole as a relic of Druidism; but I cannot find any solid foundation for such an opinion.

It should be observed, that the May-games were not always celebrated upon the first day of the month; and to this we may add the following extract from Stow: "In the month of May the citizens of London of all estates, generally in every parish, and in some instances two or three parishes joining together, had their several mayings, and did fetch their may-poles with divers warlike shows; with good archers, morrice-dancers, and other devices for pastime, all day long; and towards evening they had stage-plays and bonfires in the streets. These great mayings and may-games were made by the governors and masters of the city, together with the triumphant setting up of the great shaft or principal may-pole in Cornhill before the parish

[1] Page 223, and Introduction. [2] Antiq. Vulgares, chap. 25.

church of Saint Andrew,"[1] which was thence called Saint Andrew Undershaft.

No doubt the May-games are of long standing, though the time of their institution cannot be traced. Mention is made of the May-pole at Cornhill, in a poem called the "Chaunce of the Dice," attributed to Chaucer. In the time of Stow, who died in 1605, they were not conducted with so great splendour as they had been formerly, owing to a dangerous riot which took place upon May-day, 1517, in the ninth year of Henry VIII. on which occasion several foreigners were slain, and two of the ringleaders of the disturbance were hanged.

Stow has passed unnoticed the manner in which the May-poles were usually decorated; this deficiency I shall supply from Philip Stubs, a contemporary writer, one who saw these pastimes in a very different point of view, and some may think his invectives are more severe than just; however, I am afraid the conclusion of them, though perhaps much exaggerated, is not altogether without foundation. He writes thus:[2] "Against Maie-day, Whitsunday, or some other time of the year, every parish, towne, or village, assemble themselves, both men, women, and children; and either all together, or dividing themselves into companies, they goe some to the woods and groves, some to the hills and mountaines, some to one place, some to another, where they spend all the night in pleasant pastimes, and in the morning they return, bringing with them birche boughes and branches of trees to deck their assemblies withal. But their chiefest jewel they bring from thence is the Maie-pole, which they bring home with great veneration, as thus—they have twentie or fourtie yoake of oxen, every oxe having a sweete nosegaie of flowers tied to the tip of his hornes, and these oxen drawe home the May-poale, their stinking idol[3] rather, which they covered all over with flowers and herbes, bound round with strings from the top to the bottome, and sometimes it was painted with variable colours, having two or three hundred men, women, and children following it with great devotion. And thus equipped it was reared with handkerchiefes and flagges streaming on the top, they strawe the ground round about it, they bind green

[1] Survey of London, p. 80.

[2] In his Anotomie of Abuses, printed in 1595.

[3] The May-pole is treated with little les ceremony by the Rev Thomas Fuller, another Reformist, cited in the Introduction.

boughs about it, they set up summer halles, bowers, and arbours hard by it, and then fall they to banquetting and feasting, to leaping and dauncing about it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idolls. I have heard it crediblie reported, by men of great gravity, credite, and reputation, that of fourtie, threescore, or an hundred maides going to the wood, there have scarcely the third part of them returned home againe as they went."

In the churchwarden's account for the parish of St. Helen's in Abingdon, Berks, dated 1566, the ninth of Elizabeth, is the following article: "Payde for setting up Robin Hoode's bower, eighteenpence;" that is, a bower for the reception of the fictitious Robin Hood and his company, belonging to the May-day pageant.[1]

XVI.—THE LORD AND LADY OF THE MAY.

It seems to have been the constant custom, at the celebration of the May-games, to elect a Lord and Lady of the May, who probably presided over the sports. On the thirtieth of May, 1557, in the fourth year of queen Mary, "was a goodly May-game in Fenchurch-street, with drums, and guns, and pikes; and with the nine worthies who rode, and each of them made his speech, there was also a morrice dance, and an elephant and castle, and the Lord and Lady of the May appearing to make up the show."[2] We also read that the Lord of the May, and no doubt his Lady also, was decorated with scarfs, ribbands, and other fineries. Hence, in the comedy called The Knight of the Burning Pestle, written by Beaumont and Fletcher in 1611, a citizen, addressing himself to the other actors, says, "Let Ralph come out on May-day in the morning, and speak upon a conduit, with all his scarfs about him, and his feathers, and his rings, and his knacks, as Lord of the May." His request is complied with, and Ralph appears upon the stage in the assumed character, where he makes his speech, beginning in this manner:

With gilded staff and crossed scarf the May Lord here I stand.

The citizen is supposed to be a spectator, and Ralph is his apprentice, but permitted by him to play in the piece.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, or perhaps still earlier, the ancient stories of Robin Hood and his frolicsome

[1] Archæologia, vol. i. cap. 4, p. 11.
[2] Strype's Eccles. Mem. vol. iii. cap. 49, p. 377.

companions seem to have been new-modelled, and divided into separate ballads, which much increased their popularity; for this reason it was customary to personify this famous outlaw, with several of his most noted associates, and add them to the pageantry of the May-games. He presided as Lord of the May; and a female, or rather, perhaps, a man habited like a female, called the Maid Marian, his faithful mistress, was the Lady of the May. His companions were distinguished by the title of "Robin Hood's Men," and were also equipped in appropriate dresses; their coats, hoods, and hose were generally green. Henry VIII., in the first year of his reign, one morning, by way of pastime, came suddenly into the chamber where the queen and her ladies were sitting. He was attended by twelve noblemen, all apparelled in short coats of Kentish kendal, with hoods and hosen of the same; each of them had his bow, with arrows, and a sword, and a buckler, "like outlawes, or Robyn Hode's men." The queen, it seems, at first was somewhat affrighted by their appearance, of which she was not the least apprised. This gay troop performed several dances, and then departed."[1]

Bishop Latimer, in a sermon which he preached before king Edward VI., relates the following anecdote, which proves the great popularity of the May pageants. "Coming," says he, "to a certain town on a holiday to preach, I found the church door fast locked. I taryed there half an houre and more, and at last the key was found, and one of the parish comes to me and sayes, Syr, this is a busy day with us, we cannot hear you; it is Robin Hoode's day; the parish are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood; I pray you let[2] them not. I was fayne, therefore, to give place to Robin Hood. I thought my rochet would have been regarded; but it would not serve, it was faine to give place to Robin Hoode's men."[3] In Garrick's Collection of Old Plays[4] is one entitled "A new Playe of Robyn Hoode, for to be played in the May-games, very pleasaunte and full of Pastyme," printed at London by William Copland, black letter, without date. This playe consists of short dialogues between Robyn Hode, Lytell John, Fryer Tucke, a potter's boy, and the potter. Robyn fights with the friar, who afterwards becomes his chaplain; he also breaks the

[1] Hall. in Vit. Hen. VIII. fol. vi
[2] Hinder or prevent
[3] Latimer's Sermons, printed 1589
[4] K. vol. x.

boy's pots, and commits several other absurdities. The language of the piece is extremely low, and full of ribaldry.

XVII.—GRAND MAY-GAME AT GREENWICH.

It has been observed that the May-games were not confined to the first day of the month, neither were they always concluded in one day; on the contrary, I have now before me a manuscript,[1] written apparently in the reign of Henry VII., wherein a number of gentlemen, professing themselves to be the servants of the Lady May, promise to be in the royal park at Greenwich, day after day, from two o'clock in the afternoon till five, in order to perform the various sports and exercises specified in the agreement; that is to say,

On the 14th day of May they engage to meet at a place appointed by the king, armed with the "harneis[2] thereunto accustomed, to kepe the fielde, and to run with every commer eight courses." Four additional courses were to be granted to any one who desired it, if the time would permit, or the queen was pleased to give them leave; agreeable to the ancient custom by which the ladies presided as arbitrators at the justs.[3]

On the 15th the archers took the field to shoot at "the standard with flight arrows."

On the 16th they held a tournament with "swords rebated to strike with every commer eight strokes," according to the accustomed usage.

On the 18th, for I suppose Sunday intervened, they were to be ready to "wrestle with all commers all manner of ways," according to their pleasure.

On the 19th they were to enter the field, to fight on foot at the barriers, with spears in their hands and swords rebated by their sides, and with spear and sword to defend their barriers: there were to be eight strokes with the spear, two of them "with the foyne," or short thrust, and eight strokes with the sword; "every man to take his best advantage with gript or otherwise."

On the 20th they were to give additional proof of their strength by casting "the barre on foote, and with the arme, bothe heavit

[1] Harl. Lib. 69.

[2] I suppose the author means tilting armour, for the purpose of justing, here called running of courses.

[3] See p. 143.

and hight." I do not clearly understand this passage, but suppose it means by lifting and casting aloft.

On the 21st they recommenced the exercises, which were to be continued daily, Sundays excepted, through the remaining part of May, and a fortnight in the month of June.

XVIII.—ROYAL MAY-GAME AT SHOOTER'S HILL.

Henry VIII., when young, delighted much in pageantry, and the early part of his reign abounded with gaudy shows; most of them were his own devising, and others contrived for his amusement. Among the latter we may reckon a May-game at Shooter's hill, which was exhibited by the officers of his guards; they in a body, amounting to two hundred, all of them clothed in green, and headed by their captain, who personated Robin Hood, met the king one morning as he was riding to take the air, accompanied by the queen and a large suite of the nobility of both sexes. The fictitious foresters first amused them with a double discharge of their arrows; and then, their chief approaching the king, invited him to see the manner in which he and his companions lived. The king complied with the request, and the archers, blowing their horns, conducted him and his train into the wood under the hill, where an arbour was made with green boughs, having a hall, a great chamber, and an inner chamber, and the whole was covered with flowers and sweet herbs. When the company had entered the arbour, Robin Hood excused the want of more abundant refreshment, saying to the king, "Sir, we outlaws usually breakfast upon venison, and have no other food to offer you." The king and queen then sat down, and were served with venison and wine; and after the entertainment, with which it seems they were well pleased, they departed, and on their return were met by two ladies riding in a rich open chariot, drawn by five horses. Every horse, according to Holingshed, had his name upon his head, and upon every horse sat a lady, with her name written. On the first horse, called Lawde, sat Humidity; on the second, named Memeon, sat lady Vert, or green; on the third, called Pheton, sat lady Vegitive; on the fourth, called Rimphon, sat lady Pleasaunce; on the fifth, called Lampace, sat Sweet Odour.[1] Both of the ladies in the chariot were splendidly

[1] Hall, in Vit. Hen. VIII. an. 2, p. vi.

apparelled; one of them personified the Lady May, and the other Lady Flora, "who," we are told, "saluted the king with divers goodly songs, and so brought him to Greenwich."

We may here just observe that the May-games had attracted the notice of the nobility long before the time of Henry; and agreeable to the custom of the times, no doubt, was the following curious passage in the old romance called The Death of Arthur: "Now it befell in the moneth of lusty May, that queene Guenever called unto her the knyghtes of the round table, and gave them warning that, early in the morning, she should ride on maying into the woods and fields beside Westminster." The knights were all of them to be clothed in green, to be well horsed, and every one of them to have a lady behind him, followed by an esquire and two yeomen, &c.[1]

XIX.—MAY MILK-MAIDS.

"It is at this time," that is, in May, says the author of one of the papers in the Spectator,[2] "we see the brisk young wenches, in the country parishes, dancing round the Maypole. It is likewise on the first day of this month that we see the ruddy milk-maid exerting herself in a most sprightly manner under a pyramid of silver tankards, and like the virgin Tarpeia, oppressed by the costly ornaments which her benefactors lay upon her. These decorations of silver cups, tankards, and salvers, were borrowed for the purpose, and hung round the milk-pails, with the addition of flowers and ribbands, which the maidens carried upon their heads when they went to the houses of their customers, and danced in order to obtain a small gratuity from each of them. In a set of prints called Tempest's Cryes of London, there is one called the merry milk-maid's, whose proper name was Kate Smith. She is dancing with the milk-pail decorated as above mentioned, upon her head.[3] Of late years the plate, with the other decorations, were placed in a pyramidical form, and carried by two chairmen upon a wooden horse. The maidens walked before it, and performed the dance without any incumbrance. I really cannot discover what analogy the silver tankards and salvers can have to the business of the milk-

[1] See an account of this book in the Introduction.
[2] Vol. v. No. 365, first published A. D. 1712.
[3] See Granger's Biog. Hist. vol. iv. p. 354.

maids. I have seen them act with much more propriety upon this occasion, when in place of these superfluous ornaments they substituted a cow. The animal had her horns gilt, and was nearly covered with ribbands of various colours, formed into bows and roses, and interspersed with green oaken leaves and bunches of flowers.

XX.—MAY FESTIVAL OF THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS.

The chimney-sweepers of London have also singled out the first of May for their festival; at which time they parade the streets in companies, disguised in various manners. Their dresses are usually decorated with gilt paper, and other mock fineries; they have their shovels and brushes in their hands, which they rattle one upon the other; and to this rough music they jump about in imitation of dancing. Some of the larger companies have a fiddler with them, and a Jack in the Green, as well as a Lord and Lady of the May, who follow the minstrel with great stateliness, and dance as occasion requires. The Jack in the Green is a piece of pageantry consisting of a hollow frame of wood or wicker-work, made in the form of a sugar-loaf, but open at the bottom, and sufficiently large and high to receive a man. The frame is covered with green leaves and bunches of flowers interwoven with each other, so that the man within may be completely concealed, who dances with his companions, and the populace are mightily pleased with the oddity of the moving pyramid.

XXI.—WHITSUN GAMES.

The Whitsuntide holidays were celebrated by various pastimes commonly practised upon other festivals; but the Monday after the Whitsun week, at Kidlington in Oxfordshire, a fat lamb was provided, and the maidens of the town, having their thumbs tied behind them, were permitted to run after it, and she who with her mouth took hold of the lamb was declared the Lady of the Lamb, which, being killed and cleaned, but with the skin hanging upon it, was carried on a long pole before the lady and her companions to the green, attended with music, and a morisco dance of men, and another of women. The rest of the day was spent in mirth and merry glee. Next day the

lamb, partly baked, partly boiled, and partly roasted, was served up for the lady's feast, where she sat, "majestically at the upper end of the table, and her companions with her," the music playing during the repast, which, being finished, the solemnity ended.[1]

XXII.—MIDSUMMER EVE FESTIVAL.

On the Vigil of Saint John the Baptist, commonly called Midsummer Eve, it was usual in most country places, and also in towns and cities, for the inhabitants, both old and young, and of both sexes, to meet together, and make merry by the side of a large fire made in the middle of the street, or in some open and convenient place, over which the young men frequently leaped by way of frolic, and also exercised themselves with various sports and pastimes, more especially with running wrestling, and dancing. These diversions they continued till midnight, and sometimes till cock-crowing;[2] several of the superstitious ceremonies practised upon this occasion are contained in the following verses, as they are translated by Barnabe Googe, from the fourth book of The Popish Kingdome, written in Latin by Tho. Neogeorgus: the translation was dedicated to queen Elizabeth, and appeared in 1570.

Then doth the joyfull feast of John the Baptist take his turne,
When bonfiers great, with loftie flame, in every towne doe burne:
And yong men round about with maides doe daunce in every streete,
With garlands wrought of Mother-wort, or else with Vervaine sweete
And many other flowres faire, with Violets in their handes
Whereas they all do fondly thinke, that whosoever stands,
And thorow the flowres beholds the flame, his eyes shall feele no paine.
When thus till night they daunced have, they through the fire amaine
With striving mindes doe run, and all their hearbes they cast therin,
And then, with wordes devout and prayers, they solemnely begin,
Desiring God that all their illes may there confounded bee,
Whereby they thinke through all that yeare, from Agues to be free.

At London, in addition to the bonfires, "on the eve of this saint, as well as upon that of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, every man's door was shaded with green birch, long fennel, Saint John's wort, orpin, white lilies, and the like, ornamented with garlands of beautiful flowers. They, the citizens, had also

[1] Blount's Ancient Tenures, p. 49. [2] Bourne's Antiq. vol. ii. chap. 27

lamps of glass with oil burning in them all night; and some of them hung out branches of iron, curiously wrought, containing hundreds of lamps lighted at once, which made a very splendid appearance." This information we receive from Stow, who tells us that, in his time, New Fish-street and Thames-street were peculiarly brilliant upon these occasions.

XXIII.—SUPPOSED ORIGIN OF THE MIDSUMMER VIGIL.

The reasons assigned for making bonfires upon the vigil of Saint John in particular are various, for many writers have attempted the investigation of their origin; but unfortunately all their arguments, owing to the want of proper information, are merely hypothetical, and of course cannot be much depended upon. Those who suppose these fires to be a relic of some ancient heathenish superstition engrafted upon the variegated stock of ceremonies belonging to the Romish church, are not, in my opinion, far distant from the truth. The looking through the flowers at the fire, the casting of them finally into it, and the invocation to the Deity, with the effects supposed to be produced by those ceremonies, as mentioned in the preceding poem, are circumstances that seem to strengthen such a conclusion.

According to some of the pious writers of antiquity, they made large fires, which might be seen at a great distance, upon the vigil of this saint, in token that he was said in holy writ to be "a shining light." Others, agreeing with this, add also, these fires were made to drive away the dragons and evil spirits hovering in the air; and one of them gravely says, in some countries they burned bones, which was called a bone-fire; for "the dragons hattyd nothyng mor than the stynche of brenyng bonys." This, says another, habent ex gentilibus, they have from the heathens. The author last cited laments the abuses committed upon these occasions. "This vigil," says he, "ought to be held with cheerfulness and piety, but not with such merriment as is shewn by the profane lovers of this world, who make great fires in the streets, and indulge themselves with filthy and unlawful games, to which they add glotony and drunkenness, and the commission of many other shameful indecencies."[1]

[1] MSS. Harl. 2354 and 2391.

XXIV.—SETTING OF THE MIDSUMMER WATCH.

In former times it was customary in London, and in other great cities, to set the Midsummer watch upon the eve of Saint John the Baptist; and this was usually performed with great pomp and pageantry.[1] The following short extract from the faithful historian, John Stow, will be sufficient to show the childishness as well as the expensiveness of this idle spectacle. The institution, he assures us, had been appointed, "time out of mind;" and upon this occasion the standing watches "in bright harness." There was also a marching watch, that passed through all the principal streets. In order to furnish this watch with lights, there were appointed seven hundred cressets; the charge for every cresset was two shillings and fourpence; every cresset required two men, the one to bear it, and the other to carry a bag with light to serve it. The cresset was a large lanthorn fixed at the end of a long pole, and carried upon a man's shoulder. The cressets were found partly by the different companies, and partly by the city chamber. Every one of the cresset-bearers was paid for his trouble; he had also given to him, that evening, a strawen hat and a painted bridge, besides the donation of his breakfast next morning. The marching watch consisted of two thousand men, most of them being old soldiers of every denomination. They appeared in appropriate habits, with their arms in their hands, and many of them, especially the musicians and the standard bearers, rode upon great horses. There were also divers pageants and morris-dancers with the constables, one half of which, to the amount of one hundred and twenty, went out on the eve of Saint John, and the other half on the eve of Saint Peter. The constables were dressed in "bright harnesse, some over gilt, and every one had a joinct of scarlet thereupon, and a chain of gold; his henchman following him, and his minstrels before him, and his cresset-light at his side. The mayor himself came after him, well mounted, with his sword-bearer before him, in fair armour on horseback, preceded by the waits, or city minstrels, and the mayor's officers in liveries of worsted, or say jackets party coloured. The mayor was

[1] The midsummer pageants at Chester are fully described in the Introduction.

surrounded by his footmen and torch-bearers, and followed by two henchmen on large horses. The sheriffs' watches came one after the other in like order, but not so numerous; for the mayor had, besides his giant, three pageants; whereas the sheriffs had only two besides their giants, each with their morris-dance and one henchman: their officers were clothed in jackets of worsted, or say party-coloured, but differing from those belonging to the mayor, and from each other: they had also a great number of harnessed men."[1] This old custom of setting the watch in London was maintained until the year 1539, in the 31st year of Henry VIII. when it was discontinued on account of the expense, and revived in the year 1548, the 2d of Edward VI. and soon after that time it was totally abolished.

On Midsummer eve it was customary annually at Burford, in Oxfordshire, to carry a dragon up and down the town, with mirth and rejoicing; to which they also added the picture[2] of a giant. Dr. Plott tells us, this pageantry was continued in his memory, and says it was established, at least the dragon part of the show, in memory of a famous victory obtained near that place, about 750, by Cuthred, king of the west Saxons, over Ethebald, king of Mercia, who lost his standard, surmounted by a golden dragon,[3] in the action.

XXV.—PROCESSIONS ON ST. CLEMENT'S AND ST. CATHERINE'S DAYS.

The Anniversary of Saint Clement, and that of Saint Catherine, the first upon the 23d, and the second upon the 25th, of November, were formerly particularized by religious processions which had been disused after the Reformation, but again established by queen Mary. In the year she ascended the throne, according to Strype, on the evening of Saint Catherine's day, her procession was celebrated at London with five hundred great lights, which were carried round Saint Paul's steeple;[4] and again three years afterwards, her image, if I clearly understand my author, was taken about the battlements of the same church with fine singing and many great lights.[5] But the most splendid show of this kind that took place in Mary's time was the procession on Saint Clement's day, exhibited in the streets

[1] Survey of London, pp. 84, 85.
[2] Perhaps it should be image, and resembled those commonly used in other pageants.
[3] Nat. Hist Oxford, p. 343, and Blount's Ancient Tenures, p. 154.
[4] Eccl. Memoirs, vol. iii. chap. 39, p. 51. [5] Ibid. p. 302.

of London: it consisted of sixty priests and clerks in their copes, attended by divers of the inns of court, who went next the priests, preceded by eighty banners and streamers, with the waits or minstrels of the city playing upon different instruments.[1]

XXVI.—WASSAILS.

Wassail, or rather the wassail bowl, which was a bowl of spiced ale, formerly carried about by young women on New-year's eve, who went from door to door in their several parishes singing a few couplets of homely verses composed for the purpose, and presented the liquor to the inhabitants of the house where they called, expecting a small gratuity in return, Selden alludes to this custom in the following comparison; "The Pope, in sending reliques to princes, does as wenches do by their wassails at New-year's tide, they present you with a cup, and you must drink of a slabby stuff; but the meaning is, you must give them monies ten times more than it is worth."[2] The wassail is said to have originated from the words of Rowena, the daughter of Hengist; who, presenting a bowl of wine to Vortigern, the king of the Britons, said, Wæs hæl, or, Health to you, my lord the king; (Ꝺæꝛ hæl laꝼoꝛð cẏnnıng). If this derivation of the custom should be thought doubtful, I can only say that it has the authority at least of antiquity on its side. The wassails are now quite obsolete; but it seems that fifty years back, some vestiges of them were remaining in Cornwall; but the time of their performance was changed to twelfth-day.[3]

XXVII.—SHEEP-SHEARING AND HARVEST-HOME.

There are two feasts annually held among the farmers of this country, which are regularly made in the spring, and at the end of the summer, or the beginning of autumn, but not confined to any particular day. The first is the sheep-shearing, and the second the harvest-home; both of them were celebrated in ancient times with feasting and variety of rustic pastimes: at present, excepting a dinner, or more frequently a supper, at the conclusion of the sheep-shearing and the harvest, we have little remains of the former customs.

[1] Eccl. Memoirs, vol. iii. chap. 49, p. 377
[2] Table Talk, 1689, article Pope.
[3] Heath's Description of Cornwall, p. 445

The particular manner in which the sheep-shearing was celebrated in old time is not recorded; but respecting the harvest-home we meet with several curious observations. Hentzner, a foreign gentleman, who was in England at the close of the sixteenth century, and wrote an account of what he saw here, says, "as we were returning to our inn, (in or near Windsor) we happened to meet some country people celebrating their harvest-home: their last load of corn they crown with flowers, having besides, an image richly dressed, by which perhaps they signify Ceres; this they keep moving about, while the men and women, and men and maid-servants, riding through the streets in the cart, shout as loud as they can till they arrive at the barn." Moresin, another foreign writer, also tells us that he saw "in England, the country people bring home," from the harvest field, I presume he means, "a figure made with corn, round which the men and the women were promiscuously singing, and preceded by a piper or a drum."[1] "In the north," says Mr. Brand, "not half a century ago, they used every where to dress up a figure something similar to that just described, at the end of harvest, which they called a kern-baby, plainly a corruption of corn-baby, as the kern, or churn supper, is of corn-supper.[2]

The harvest-supper in some places is called a mell-supper, and a churn-supper. Mell is plainly derived from the French word mesler, to mingle together, the master and servant promiscuously at the same table.[3] At the mell-supper, Bourne[4] tells us, "the servant and his master are alike, and every thing is done with equal freedom; they sit at the same table, converse freely together, and spend the remaining part of the night in dancing and singing, without any difference or distinction. "There was," continues my author, "a custom among the heathens much like this at the gathering of their harvest, when the servants were indulged with their liberty, and put upon an equality with their masters for a certain time. Probably both of them originated from the Jewish feast of tabernacles."[5]

XXVIII.—WAKES.

The wakes when first instituted in this country were established upon religious principles, and greatly resembled the agapæ,

[1] Præcedente tibicine aut tympano. Moresin. Deprav. Reliq. Orig. in verbo vacina.
[2] Brand's Observations on Bourne's Vulg. Antiq. chap. xxxi. p. 303.
[3] Ibid. [4] Vulg. Antiq. ut supra. [5] Ibid.

Αγαπαι, or love feasts of the early Christians. It seems, however, clear, that they derived their origin from some more ancient rites practised in the times of paganism. Hence Pope Gregory, in his letter to Melitus, a British abbot, says, "whereas the people were accustomed to sacrifice many oxen in honour of dæmons, let them celebrate a religious and solemn festival, and not slay the animals, diabolo, to the devil, but to be eaten by themselves, ad laudem Dei, to the praise of God."[1] These festivals were primitively held upon the day of the dedication of the church in each district, or the birth-day of the saint whose relics were therein deposited, or to whose honour it was consecrated; for which purpose the people were directed to make booths and tents with the boughs of trees adjoining to the churhces, circa easdem ecclesias,[2] and in them to celebrate the feast with thanksgiving and prayer. In process of time the people assembled on the vigil, or evening preceding the saint's-day, and came, says an old author, "to churche with candellys burnyng, and would wake, and come toward night to the church in their devocion,"[3] agreeable to the requisition contained in one of the canons established by king Edgar, whereby those who came to the wake were ordered to pray devoutly, and not to betake themselves to drunkenness and debauchery. The necessity for this restriction plainly indicates that abuses of this religious institution began to make their appearance as early as the tenth century. The author above cited goes on, "and afterwards the pepul fell to letcherie, and songs, and daunses, with harping and piping, and also to glotony and sinne; and so tourned the holyness to cursydness; wherefore holy faders ordeyned the pepull to leve that waking and to fast the evyn, but it is called vigilia, that is waking, in English, and eveyn, for of eveyn they were wont to come to churche." In proportion as these festivals deviated from the original design of their institution, they became more popular, the conviviality was extended, and not only the inhabitants of the parish to which the church belonged were present at them, but they were joined by others from the neighbouring towns and parishes, who flocked together upon these occasions, and the greater the reputation of the tutelar saint, the greater generally was the promiscuous assembly.

[1] Bede, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. cap. 30.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Homily for the Vigil of St. John Baptist. MS. Harl.

The pedlars and hawkers attended to sell their wares, and so by degrees the religious wake was converted into a secular fair. The riot and debaucheries which eventually took place at these nocturnal meetings, became so offensive to religious persons that they were suppressed, and regular fairs established, to be held on the saint's-day, or upon some other day near to it as might be most convenient; and if the place did not admit of any traffic of consequence, the time was spent in festive mirth and vulgar amusements. These fairs still retain the ancient name of wakes in many parts of the kingdom.

XXIX.—SUNDAY FESTIVALS.

"In the northern parts of this nation," says Bourne, "the inhabitants of most country villages are wont to observe some Sunday in a more particular manner than the other common Sundays of the year, namely, the Sunday after the day of dedication of their church," that is, the Sunday after the saint's day to whom the church was dedicated. "Then the people deck themselves in their gaudiest clothes, and have open doors and splendid entertainments for the reception and treating of their relations and friends, who visit them on that occasion from each neighbouring town. The morning is spent for the most part at church, though not as that morning was wont to be spent, with the commemoration of the saint or martyr; nor the grateful remembrance of the builder and endower." Being come from church, the remaining part of the day is spent in eating and drinking, and so is a day or two afterwards, together with all sorts of rural pastimes and exercises, such as dancing on the green, wrestling, cudgelling, and the like. "In the northern parts, the Sunday's feasting is almost lost, and they observe only one day for the whole, which among them is called hopping, I suppose from the dancing and other exercises then practised. Here they used to end many quarrels between neighbour and neighbour, and hither came the wives in comely manner, and they which were of the better sort had their mantles carried with them, as well for show as to keep them from the cold at the table. These mantles also many did use at the churches, at the morrow masses, and at other times."[1]

[1] Antiq. Vulg. chap. 30.

XXX.—CHURCH-ALES.

The Church-ales, called also Easter-ales, and Whitsun-ales from their being sometimes held on Easter-Sunday, and on Whit-Sunday, or on some of the holidays that follow them, certainly originated from the wakes. The churchwardens and other chief parish officers observing the wakes to be more popular than any other holidays, rightly conceived, that by establishing other institutions somewhat similar to them, they might draw together a large company of people, and annually collect from them, gratuitously as it were, such sums of money for the support and repairs of the church, as would be a great easement to the parish rates. By way of enticement to the populace they brewed a certain portion of strong ale, to be ready on the day appointed for the festival, which they sold to them; and most of the better sort, in addition to what they paid for their drink, contributed something towards the collection; but in some instances the inhabitants of one or more parishes were mulcted in a certain sum according to mutual agreement, as we find by an ancient stipulation,[1] couched in the following terms: "The parishioners of Elvertoon and those of Okebrook in Derbyshire agree jointly to brew four ales, and every ale of one quarter of malt between this,[2] and the feast of Saint John the Baptist next comming, and every inhabitant of the said town of Okebrook shall be at the several ales; and every husband and his wife shall pay two pence, and every cottager one penny. And the inhabitants of Elverton shall have and receive all the profits comming of the said ales, to the use and behoof of the church of Elverton; and the inhabitants of Elverton shall brew eight ales betwixt this and the feast of Saint John, at which ales the inhabitants of Okebrook shall come and pay as before rehearsed; and if any be away one ale, he is to pay at t'oder ale for both." In Cornwall the church-ales were ordered in a different manner; for there two young men of a parish were annually chosen by their foregoers to be wardens, "who, dividing the task, made collections among the parishioners of whatever provision it pleased them to bestow; this they employed in brewing, baking, and other acates, against Whitsontide, upon which holidaies the neighbours meet at the church-

[1] Dodsworth's MSS. Bid. Bob. vol. 148. fol. 97.
[2] That is, the time the contract was made.

house, and there merely feed on their own victuals, contributing some petty portion to the stock. When the feast is ended, the wardens yield in their accounts to the parishioners; and such money as exceedeth the disbursements, is layed up in store to defray any extraordinary charges arising in the parish."[1]

To what has been said upon this subject, I shall only add the following extract from Philip Stubs, an author before quoted, who lived in the reign of queen Elizabeth, whose writings[2] are pointed against the popular vices and immoralities of his time. "In certaine townes," says he, "where drunken Bacchus bears swaie against Christmass and Easter, Whitsunday, or some other time, the churchwardens, for so they call them, of every parish, with the consent of the whole parish, provide half a score or twentie quarters of mault, whereof some they buy of the church stocke, and some is given to them of the parishioners themselves, every one conferring somewhat, according to his ability; which mault being made into very strong ale, or beer, is set to sale, either in the church[3] or in some other place assigned to that purpose. Then, when this nippitatum, this huffe-cappe, as they call it, this nectar of life, is set abroach, well is he that can get the soonest to it, and spends the most at it, for he is counted the godliest man of all the rest, and most in God's favour, because it is spent upon his church forsooth. If all be true which they say, they bestow that money which is got thereby for the repaire of their churches and chappels; they buy bookes for the service, cupps for the celebration of the sacrament, surplesses for Sir John, and such other necessaries." &c. He then proceeds to speak upon "the manner of keeping wakesses (wakes) in England," in a style similar to that above cited, and says they were "the sources of gluttonie and drunkenness;" and adds, "many spend more at one of these wakesses than in all the whole year besides." It has before been observed that this author is very severe upon most of the popular sports; but in justice to him I may add, that similar complaints have been exhibited against the church-ales and wakes in times greatly anterior to his existence. And, indeed, if we look at the wakes and fairs as they are conducted in the present day, I trust we shall not hesitate to own that they are

[1] Carew's Survey of Cornwall, 1602, book i. p. 63.
[2] The Anatomie of Abuses, 1595.
[3] I rather think it should be churchyard.

by no means proper schools for the improvement of the public morals.

The ingenious researcher into the causes of melancholy thinks that these kinds of amusement ought not to be denied to the commonalty.[1] Chaucer, in the Ploughman's Tale, reproves the priests because they were more attentive to the practice of secular pastimes than to the administration of their holy functions, saying they were expert

> At the wrestlynge and at the wake,
> And chefe chauntours at the nale,
> Markette beaters, and medlyng make,
> Hoppen and houters with heve and hale.

XXXI.—FAIRS.

The church-ales have long been discontinued; the wakes are still kept up in the northern parts of the kingdom; but neither they nor the fairs maintain their former importance; many of both, and most of the latter, have dwindled into mere markets for petty traffic, or else they are confined to the purposes of drinking, or the displayment of vulgar pastimes. These pastimes, or at least such of them as occur to my memory, I shall mention here in a cursory manner, and pass on to the remaining part of this chapter. In a paper belonging to the Spectator[2] there is a short description of a country wake. "I found," says the author, "a ring of cudgel-players, who were breaking one another's heads in order to make some impression on their mistresses' hearts." He then came to "a foot-ball match," and afterwards to "a ring of wrestlers." Here he observes, "the squire of the parish always treats the company every year with a hogshead of ale, and proposes a beaver hat as a recompence to him who gives the most falls." The last sport he mentions is pitching the bar. But he might, and with great propriety, have added most of the games in practice among the lower classes of the people that have been specified in the foregoing pages, and perhaps the whistling match recorded in another paper.[3] "The prize," we are told, "was one guinea, to be conferred upon the ablest whistler; that is, he that could whistle clearest, and go through his tune without laughing, to which at the same time he was provoked by the antic postures of a

[1] Burton, Anat. Melancholy, part ii. sect. 2. cap. 4.
[2] Vol. ii. No. 161, first printed 1711.
[3] Vol. iii. No.

merry-andrew, who was to stand upon the stage, and play his tricks in the eye of the performer. There were three competitors; the two first failed, but the third, in defiance of the zany and all his arts, whistled through two tunes with so settled a countenance that he bore away the prize, to the great admiration of the spectators." This paper was written by Addison, who assures us he was present at the performance, which took place at Bath about the year 1708. To this he adds another curious pastime, as a kind of Christmas gambol, which he had seen also; that is, a yawning match for a Cheshire cheese; the sport began about midnight, when the whole company were disposed to be drowsy; and he that yawned the widest, and at the same time most naturally, so as to produce the greatest number of yawns from the spectators, obtained the cheese.

The barbarous and wicked diversion of throwing at cocks usually took place at all the wakes and fairs that were held about Shrovetide, and especially at such of them as were kept on Shrove-Tuesday. Upon the abolition of this inhuman custom, the place of the living birds was supplied by toys made in the shape of cocks, with large and heavy stands of lead, at which the boys, on paying some very trifling sum, were permitted to throw as heretofore; and he who could overturn the toy claimed it as a reward for his adroitness. This innocent pastime never became popular, for the sport derived from the torment of a living creature existed no longer, and its want was not to be compensated by the overthrowing or breaking a motionless representative; therefore the diversion was very soon discontinued.

At present, snuff-boxes, tobacco-boxes, and other trinkets of small value, or else halfpence or gingerbread, placed upon low stands, are thrown at, and sometimes apples and oranges, set up in small heaps; and children are usually enticed to lay out their money for permission to throw at them by the owners, who keep continually bawling, "Knock down one you have them all." A halfpenny is the common price for one throw, and the distance about ten or twelve yards.

The Jingling Match is a diversion common enough at country wakes and fairs. The performance requires a large circle, enclosed with ropes, which is occupied by as many persons as are permitted to play. They rarely exceed nine or ten. All of these, except one of the most active, who is the jingler, have their eyes blinded with handkerchiefs or napkins. The eyes of

the jingler are not covered, but he holds a small bell in each hand, which he is obliged to keep ringing incessantly so long as the play continues, which is commonly about twenty minutes, but sometimes it is extended to half an hour. In some places the jingler has also small bells affixed to his knees and elbows. His business is to elude the pursuit of his blinded companions, who follow him, by the sound of the bells, in all directions, and sometimes oblige him to exert his utmost abilities to effect his escape, which must be done within the boundaries of the rope, for the laws of the sport forbid him to pass beyond it. If he be caught in the time allotted for the continuance of the game, the person who caught him claims the prize: if, on the contrary, they are not able to take him, the prize becomes his due.

Hunting the Pig is another favourite rustic pastime. The tail of the animal is previously cut short, and well soaped, and in this condition he is turned out for the populace to run after him; and he who can catch him with one hand, and hold him by the stump of the tail without touching any other part, obtains him for his pains.

Sack Running, that is, men tied up in sacks, every part of them being enclosed except their heads, who are in this manner to make the best of their way to some given distance, where he who first arrives obtains the prize.

Smock Races are commonly performed by the young country wenches, and so called because the prize is a holland smock, or shift, usually decorated with ribbands.

The Wheelbarrow Race requires room, and is performed upon some open green, or in a field free from incumbrances. The candidates are all of them blindfolded, and every one has his wheelbarrow, which he is to drive from the starting-place to a mark set up for that purpose, at some considerable distance. He who first reaches the mark of course is the conqueror. But this task is seldom very readily accomplished; on the contrary, the windings and wanderings of these droll knights-errant, in most cases, produce much merriment.

The Grinning Match is performed by two or more persons endeavouring to exceed each other in the distortion of their features, every one of them having his head thrust through a horse's collar.

Smoking Matches are usually made for tobacco-boxes, or

some other trifling prizes, and may be performed two ways: the first is a trial among the candidates who shall smoke a pipe full of tobacco in the shortest time: the second is precisely the reverse; for he of them who can keep the tobacco alight within his pipe, and retain it there the longest, receives the reward.

To these we may add the Hot Hasty-pudding Eaters, who contend for superiority by swallowing the greatest quantity of hot hasty-pudding in the shortest time; so that he whose throat is widest and most callous is sure to be the conqueror.

The evening is commonly concluded with singing for laces and ribbands, which divertisement indiscriminately admits of the exertions of both sexes.

XXXII.—BONFIRES.

It has been customary in this country, from time immemorial, for the people, upon occasions of rejoicing, or by way of expressing their approbation of any public occurrence, to make large bonfires upon the close of the day, to parade the street with great lights, and to illuminate their houses. These spectacles may be considered as merely appendages to the pageants and pompous shows that usually preceded them; and they seem to have been instituted principally for the diversion of the populace. In the reign of Henry VII. a letter was sent from the king to the lord-mayor and aldermen of London, commanding them to cause bonfires to be made, and to manifest other signs of rejoicing, on account of the espousals of his daughter Mary.[1] And within these forty years[2] bonfires continued to be made in London at the city expense, and in certain places at Westminster by order from the court, upon most of the public days of rejoicing; but of late they have been prohibited, and very justly, on account of the mischief occasioned by the squibs and crackers thrown about by the mob who assembled upon these occasions.

In London, and probably in other large cities, bonfires were frequently made in the summer season, not only for rejoicing sake, but to cleanse the air. Hence Stow, writing upon this subject, says, "In the months of June and July, on the vigils of festival days, and on the evenings also of those days after sunset, bonfires were made in the streets. The wealthy citizens

[1] See the Introduction. [2] [Reckoning from 1800.

placed bread and good drink upon the tables before their doors upon the vigil of the festival; but on the festival evening the same tables were more plentifully furnished with meat and drink, to which not only the neighbours but passengers were also invited to sit and partake, with great hospitality. These were called bonfires, as well of amity among neighbours that, being before at controversie, were, at these times, by the labour of others, reconciled, and made of bitter enemies loving friends; and also for the virtue that a great fire hath to purge the infection of the air."[1] There are many fanciful derivations of the compound word bonfire; but I perfectly agree with Dr. Johnson, who thinks the first syllable originated from the French word bon, good; because these fires were usually made upon the receipt of some good news, or upon occasions of public rejoicing.

XXXIII.—ILLUMINATIONS.

I do not know at what period illuminations were first used as marks of rejoicing. They are mentioned by Stow, in his Survey of London, who tells us that lamps of glass, to the amount of several hundreds, were hung upon branches of iron curiously wrought, and placed at the doors of the opulent citizens upon the vigils of Saint John the Baptist, and of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.[2] The historian does not speak of these lights as any novelty, neither is there any reason to conclude that similar illuminations were not made in other great towns and cities as well as in London; so that the custom might have been of long standing, and probably originated from some religious institution. But the lights, for I can hardly call them illuminations, most generally used at this period, were the cressets, or large lanthorns, which were carried in procession about the street. When they were laid aside, the windows of the houses were decorated with lighted candles, or the outsides ornamented with lamps of various colours, and placed in variety of forms; to which may be added, transparent paintings, inscriptions, and variety of other curious and expensive devices, that seem to be almost peculiar to the present age; and certainly the grand illuminations exhibited on the 23d of April, 1789, upon the happy occasion of his

[1] Survey of London.

[2] See p. 360. It does not appear that these lamps were made with glass of various colours, according to the present fashion. I rather think this improvement is perfectly modern.

Majesty's recovery, far surpassed, not only in the number and brilliancy of the lights, but also in the splendour and beauty of the transparencies, every other spectacle of the like kind that has been made in this country, or perhaps in any other.

XXXIV.—FIREWORKS.

Fireworks, for pastime, are little spoken of previous to the reign of Elizabeth, and seem to have been of a very trifling nature. We are told, when Ann Bullen was conveyed upon the water from Greenwich to London, previous to her coronation, in 1533, "there went before the lord-mayor's barge, a foyste[1] for a wafter full of ordinance; in which foyste was a great red dragon, continually moving and casting forth wild-fire; and round about the said foyste stood terrible, monstrous, and wilde men, casting of fire, and making a hideous noise." This vessel with the fireworks, I apprehend, was usually exhibited when the lord mayor went upon the water, and especially when he went to Westminster on the lord mayor's day. Hence Morose, in Jonson's comedy of the Silent Woman, says to his visitors, who come with drums and trumpets, "Out of my dores, you sonnes of noise and tumult, begot on an ill May-day, or when the gally-foist is afloate to Westminster; a trumpetter could not be conceived till then."[2]

Among the spectacles prepared for the diversion of queen Elizabeth at Kenelworth Castle in 1575, there were displays of fireworks, which are thus described by Laneham, who was present.[3] "On the Sunday night," says he, "after a warning piece or two,[4] was a blaze of burning darts flying to and fro, beams of stars coruscant, streams and hail of fire sparks, lightnings of wildfire on the water; and on the land, flight and shot of thunderbolts, all with such continuance, terror, and vehemence, the heavens thundered, the waters surged, and the earth shook." Another author, Gascoyne, speaks thus: "On the Sunday were fireworks showed upon the water, passing under the water a long space; and when all men thought they had been quenched, they would rise and mount out of the water again and burne furiously until they were utterlie consumed."[5]

[1] A galley, or small vessel. [2] Act iv. scene 2.
[3] Nichols's Progresses of Elizabeth, vol. i.
[4] I suppose he means the discharge of a cannon or two.
[5] Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle, p. 62.

On the Thursday following, according to Laneham, "there was at night a shew of very strange and sundry kinds of fireworks compelled by cunning to fly to and fro, and to mount very high into the air upward, and also to burn unquenchable in the water beneath." And again, sixteen years afterwards, the same queen was entertained by the earl of Hertford at Elvetham in Hampshire, and after supper there was a grand display of fireworks, preceded by "a peale of one hundred chambers,[1] discharged from the Snail Mount;" with "a like peale discharged from the ship Isle, and some great ordinance withal. Then was there a castle of fireworkes of all sorts, which played in the fort; answerable to that there was, at the Snail Mount, a globe of all manner of fireworkes, as big as a barrel. When these were spent there were many running rockets upon lines, which passed between the Snail Mount and the castle in the fort. On either side were many fire-wheeles, pikes of pleasure, and balles of wildfire, which burned in the water."[2]

XXXV.—LONDON FIREWORKS.

A writer, who lived in the reign of James I., assures us there were then "abiding in the city of London men very skilful in the art of pyrotechnie, or of fireworkes."[3] But, so far as one can judge from the machinery delineated in the books formerly written upon the subject of firework making, these exhibitions were very clumsily contrived, consisting chiefly in wheels, fire-trees, jerbs, and rockets, to which were added, men fantastically habited, who flourished away with poles or clubs charged with squibs and crackers, and fought with each other, or jointly attacked a wooden castle replete with the same materials, or combated with pasteboard dragons running upon lines and "vomitting of fire like verie furies." These men fantastically habited were called green men. Thus, in The Seven Champions of Christendom, a play written by John Kirke, and printed 1638, it is said, "Have you any squibs, any green men, in your shows, and whizzes on lines, Jack-pudding upon the rope, or resin fireworks?"

I am decidedly of opinion that the fireworks displayed within these last fifty years[4] have been more excellent in their construction, more neatly executed, and more variable and pleasing

[1] Small kind of cannons. [2] Nichols's Progresses of Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 19.
[3] History of all the Colleges in and about London, printed A. D. 1615
[4] [Before 1800.]

in their effects, than those produced at any former period. It is certain that the early firework makers were totally unacquainted with the nature and properties of the quick-match, which is made with spun cotton, soaked in a strong solution of saltpetre, and rolled, while wet, in pounded gunpowder, and which, being enclosed in small tubes of paper, communicates the fire from one part of the apparatus to another with astonishing celerity. The old firework makers were obliged to have recourse to trains of corned gunpowder, conveyed by grooves made in the wood-work of the machinery, when they were desirous of communicating the fire to a number of cases at once, and especially if they were at a distance from each other, which was not only a very circuitous process, but liable to a variety of unpleasant accidents; and to this cause is attributed the failure of the tremendous firework exhibited in the Green Park in the reign of George II., when the performance was interrupted, and the grandeur of the general effect totally destroyed, by the timbers belonging to one of the wings taking fire through the explosion of the gunpowder trains communicated by the wooden channels. This unfortunate accident, in all probability, would not have happened had the communications from one part of the machinery to the other been made with quick-match. I received the above information from a very skilful firework maker belonging to the train of artillery, who had an opportunity of seeing the manner in which the trains were laid, and was present at the exhibition.

XXXIV.—FIREWORKS ON TOWER-HILL, AT PUBLIC GARDENS, AND IN PAGEANTS.

It was customary, in my memory, for the train of artillery annually to display a grand firework upon Tower-hill on the evening of his Majesty's birth-day. This spectacle has been discontinued for several years in compliance with a petition for that purpose made by the inhabitants on account of the inconveniences they sustained thereby.

Fireworks were exhibited at Marybone Gardens while they were kept open for public entertainment; and about five-and-twenty years ago,[1] Torre, a celebrated French artist, was employed there, who, in addition to the usual displayment of fire-wheels, fixed stars, figure pieces, and other curious devices, introduced pantomimical spectacles, which afforded him an oppor

[1] [Reckoning from 1800.]

tunity of bringing forward much splendid machinery, with appropriate scenery and stage decoration, whereby he gave an astonishing effect to his performances, and excited the admiration and applause of the spectators. I particularly remember two, the Forge of Vulcan, and the Descent of Orpheus to Hell in search of his wife Eurydice. The last was particularly splendid: there were several scenes, and one of them supposed to be the Elysian fields, where the flitting backwards and forwards of the spirits was admirably represented by means of a transparent gauze artfully interposed between the actors and the spectators.

Fireworks have for many years been exhibited at Ranelagh Gardens; they are now[1] displayed occasionally at Vauxhall; and, in an inferior style, at Bermondsey Spa.

In speaking upon this subject I have mentioned some of the actors formerly concerned in the pyrotechnical shows. Those said above to have been on board the city foyst, or galley, are called monstrous wilde men;[2] others are frequently distinguished by the appellation of green men;[3] and both of them were men whimsically attired and disguised with droll masks, having large staves or clubs, headed with cases of crackers. Annexed is

114. A Green Man.

[1] [In 1800.] [2] See p. 375.

[3] See p. 375; and the Introduction; whence it appears these green men attended the pageants, and preceded the principal persons in the procession to clear the way.

This engraving, representing the character equipped in his proper habit, and flourishing his firework, is from a book of fireworks written by John Bate, and published in 1635. Below is

115. A Wodehouse.

This character, which is that of a wild or savage man, was very common in the pageants of former times, and seems to have been very popular. It was in a dress like this, I suppose, that Gascoyne appeared before queen Elizabeth; see p. 253. The figure itself is taken from a baliad, in black letter, entitled "The mad, merry Pranks of Robin Good Fellow." Bishop Percy, probably with great justice, supposes it to have been one of the stage-disguisements for the representation of this facetious spirit.

CHAPTER IV.

Popular manly Pastimes imitated by Children.—II. Horses.—III. Racing and Chacing.—IV. Wrestling and other Gymnastic Sports.—V. Marbles, and Spancounter.—VI. Tops, &c.;—The Devil among the Taylors.—VII. Even or Odd—Chuck-halfpenny;—Duck and Drake.—VIII. Baste the Bear;—Hunt the Slipper, &c.—IX. Sporting with Insects;—Kites;—Windmills.—X. Bob-cherry.—XI. Hoodman-blind;—Hot-cockles.—XII. Cock-fighting.—XIII. Anonymous Pastimes;—Mock Honours at Boarding-schools.—XIV. Houses of Cards;—Questions and Commands;—Handy-dandy;—Snap-dragon;—Push-pin;—Crambo;—Lotteries.—XV. Obsolete Pastimes.—XVI. Creag;—Queke-board;—Hand in and Hand out;—White and Black, and Making and Marring;—Figgum;—Mosel the Peg;—Hole about the Church-yard;—Penny-prick;—Pick-point, &c.;—Mottoes, Similes, and Cross-purposes;—The Parson has lost his Cloak.

I.—POPULAR MANLY PASTIMES IMITATED BY CHILDREN.

Most of the popular pastimes mentioned in the preceding pages were imitated by the younger part of the community, and in some degree, at least, became the sports of children. Archery, and the use of missive weapons of all kinds, were formerly considered as an essential part of a young man's education; for which reason the bow, the sling, the spear, and other military instruments, were put into his hands at a very early period of his life; he was also encouraged in the pursuit of such sports as promoted muscular strength, or tended to make him acquainted with the duties of a soldier. When the bow and the sling were laid aside in favour of the gun, prudence naturally forbad the putting an instrument of so dangerous a nature into the hands of children; they however provided themselves a substitute for the gun, and used a long hollow tube called a trunk, in which they thrust a small pointed arrow, contrived to fit the cavity with great exactness, and then blowing into the trunk with all their might, the arrow was driven through it and discharged at the other end by the expansion of the compressed air. Sometimes pellets of clay were used instead of the arrows. Dr. Johnson in his Dictionary, under the article trunk, has this quotation from Ray: "In a shooting trunk, the longer it is to a

certain limit, the swifter and more forcibly the air drives the pellet." The trunks were succeeded by pot-guns made with hollow pieces of elder, or of quills, the pellets being thrust into them by the means of a ramrod. These were also called pop-guns; and perhaps more properly, from the popping noise they make in discharging the pellets. Big bouncing words are compared to pot-gun reports in a comedy called The Knave in Graine, printed in 1640.[1]

II.—HORSES.

Most boys are exceedingly delighted with riding, either on horses or in carriages, and also upon men's shoulders, which we find to be a very ancient sport;[2] and I trust there are but few of my readers who have not seen them with a bough or a wand substituted for a horse, and highly pleased in imitating the galloping and prancing of that noble animal.[3] This is an amusement of great antiquity, well known in Greece; and if report speaks truth, some of the greatest men have joined in it, either to relax the vigour of their own minds for a time, or to delight their children. The Persian ambassadors found Agesilaus, the Lacedemonian monarch, employed in this manner.[4] Socrates also did the same, for which it seems his pupil Alcibiades used to laugh at him.[5] If we turn to the engraving No. 45,[6] we shall see two boys, each of them having two wands, the one serves for a horse, and the other for a spear, and thus equipped they are justing together. The engraving No. 30,[7] represents a boy mounted upon a wooden horse, drawn by two of his companions, and tilting at the quintain; and here we may remark that the bohourts, the tournaments, and most of the other superior pastimes have been subjected to youthful imitation; and that toys were made on purpose to train up the young nobility in the knowledge and pursuit of military pastimes, as may be seen by the engravings Nos. 43 and 44.[8] Nay, some writers, and not without the support of ancient documents, derive the origin of all these splendid spectacles from the sportive exercises of the Trojan boys.[9]

[1] Garrick's Collection, G. vol. ii.
[2] See p. 84.
[3] See p. 254.
[4] Plut. in Apophthegm. Laced. et Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. xii. cap. 15.
[5] Val. Max. lib. viii. cap. 8.
[6] See p 147.
[7] See p. 118.
[8] See pp. 144—146.
[9] See p. 125.

III.—RACING AND CHACING.

Contending with each other for superiority in racing on foot is natural to children;[1] and this emulation has been productive of many different amusements, among which the following seem to be the most prominent.

Base, or Prisoners' Bars, is described in a preceding part of this work.[2]

Hunt the Fox.—In this game one of the boys is permitted to run out, and having law given to him, that is, being permitted to go to a certain distance from his comrades before they pursue him, their object is to take him if possible before he can return home. We have the following speech from an idle boy in The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art, an old comedy, written towards the close of the sixteenth century:[3]

> And also when we play and hunt the fox,
> outrun all the boys in the schoole.

Hunt the Hare is the same pastime under a different denomination.

Harry-racket, or Hide and Seek, called also Hoop and Hide; where one party of the boys remain at a station called their home, while the others go out and hide themselves; when they are hid one of them cries hoop, as a signal for those at home to seek after them. If they who are hidden can escape the vigilance of the seekers and get home uncaught, they go out to hide again; but so many of them as are caught, on the contrary, become seekers, and those who caught them have the privilege of hiding themselves.

Thread the Taylor's Needle.—In this sport the youth of both sexes frequently join. As many as choose to play lay hold of hands, and the last in the row runs to the top, where passing under the arms of the two first, the rest follow: the first then becoming the last, repeats the operation, and so on alternately as long as the game continues.

Cat after Mouse; performed indiscriminately by the boys and the girls. All the players but one holding each other's hands form a large circle; he that is exempted passes round, and striking one of them, immediately runs under the arms of the rest; the person so struck is obliged to pursue him until he be

[1] See p. 77. [2] See p. 78.

caught, but at the same time he must be careful to pass under the arms of the same players as he did who touched him, or he forfeits his chance and stands out, while he that was pursued claims a place in the circle. When this game is played by an equal number of boys and girls, a boy must touch a girl, and a girl a boy, and when either of them be caught they go into the middle of the ring and salute each other; hence is derived the name of kiss in the ring.

Barley-brake.—The excellency of this sport seems to have consisted in running well; but I know not its properties. Johnson quotes these lines from Sidney:

> By neighbours prais'd, she went abroad thereby,
> At barley-brake her sweet swift feet to try.[1]

Puss in the Corner.—A certain number of boys or girls stand singly at different distances; suppose we say for instance one at each of the four corners of a room, a fifth is then placed in the middle; the business of those who occupy the corners is to keep changing their positions in a regular succession, and of the out-player, to gain one of the corners vacated by the change before the successor can reach it: if done he retains it, and the loser takes his place in the middle.

Leap Frog.—One boy stoops down with his hands upon his knees and others leap over him, every one of them running forward and stooping in his turn. The game consists in a continued succession of stooping and leaping. It is mentioned by Shakspeare in King Henry the Fffth; "If I could win a lady at leap-frog, I should quickly leap into a wife:" by Jonson in the comedy of Bartholomew Fair, "A leap-frogge chance now;" and by several other more modern writers.

IV.—WRESTLING AND OTHER GYMNASTIC SPORTS.

To the foregoing pastimes we may add Wrestling, which was particularly practised by the boys in the counties of Cornwall and Devon.[2] In the engraving No. 18, we find two lads contending for mastery at this diversion.

Hopping and Sliding upon one Leg are both of them childish sports, but at the same time very ancient, for they were practised

[1] Dictionary, word *barley-brake*.

[2] See p. 80.

by the Grecian youth; one they called akinetinda, Ακινητινδα,[1] which was a struggle between the competitors who should stand motionless the longest upon the sole of his foot; the other denominated ascoliasmos, Ασκωλιασμος,[2] was dancing or hopping upon one foot,[3] the conqueror being he who could hop the most frequently, and continue the performance longer than any of his comrades; and this pastime is alluded to by the author of the old comedy, The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art, wherein a boy boasting of his proficiency in various school games, adds,

And I hop a good way upon my one legge.

Among the school-boys in my memory there was a pastime called Hop-Scotch, which was played in this manner: a parallelogram about four or five feet wide, and ten or twelve feet in length, was made upon the ground and divided laterally into eighteen or twenty different compartments, which were called beds; some of them being larger than others. The players were each of them provided with a piece of a tile, or any other flat material of the like kind, which they cast by the hand into the different beds in a regular succession, and every time the tile was cast, the player's business was to hop upon one leg after it, and drive it out of the boundaries at the end where he stood to throw it; for, if it passed out at the sides, or rested upon any one of the marks, it was necessary for the cast to be repeated. The boy who performed the whole of this operation by the fewest casts of the tile was the conqueror.

Skipping.—This amusement is probably very ancient. It is performed by a rope held by both ends, that is, one end in each hand, and thrown forwards or backwards over the head and under the feet alternately. Boys often contend for superiority of skill in this game, and he who passes the rope about most times without interruption is the conqueror. In the hop season, a hop-stem stripped of its leaves is used instead of a rope, and in my opinion it is preferable.

Trundling the hoop is a pastime of uncertain origin, but much in practice at present, and especially in London, where the boys appear with their hoops in the public streets, and are sometimes very troublesome to those who are passing through them.

[1] Joan. Meursi, de Lud. Græc. [2] Pollux, Lib. ix. cap. 7 [3] See p. 225.

Swimming, sliding,[1] and of late years skating, may be reckoned among the boys' amusements; also walking upon stilts,[2] swinging, and the pastime of the meritot and see-saw, or tetter-totter, which have been mentioned already,[3] together with most of the games played with the ball,[4] as well as nine-pins and skittles.[5]

V.—MARBLES AND SPAN-COUNTER.

Marbles seem to have been used by the boys as substitutes for bowls, and with them they amuse themselves in many different manners. I believe originally nuts, round stones, or any other small things that could be easily bowled along, were used as marbles. Those now played with seem to be of more modern invention. It is said of Augustus when young, that by way of amusement he spent many hours in playing with little Moorish boys cum nucibus, with nuts.[6] The author of one of the Tatlers calls it "a game of marbles not unlike our common taw."[7]

Taw, wherein a number of boys put each of them one or two marbles in a ring and shoot at them alternately with other marbles, and he who obtains the most of them by beating them out of the ring is the conqueror.

Nine holes; which consists in bowling of marbles at a wooden bridge with nine arches. There is also another game of marbles where four, five, or six holes, and sometimes more, are made in the ground at a distance from each other; and the business of every one of the players is to bowl a marble by a regular succession into all the holes, which he who completes in the fewest bowls obtains the victory.

Boss out, or boss and span, also called hit or span, wherein one bowls a marble to any distance that he pleases, which serves as a mark for his antagonist to bowl at, whose business it is to hit the marble first bowled, or lay his own near enough to it for him to span the space between them and touch both the marbles; in either case he wins, if not, his marble remains where it lay and becomes a mark for the first player, and so alternately until the game be won.

Span-counter is a pastime similar to the former, but played with counters instead of marbles I have frequently seen the

[1] See pp. 85, 86. Taken from tricks of the jugglers. See p. 226.
[2] See pp. 302, 303. [3] See chap. iii. p. 91, et infra. [4] See p. 270.
[5] Sueton, in Vita Aug. cap. 13. [6] No. 112.

boys for want of both perform it with stones. This sport is called in French tapper, a word signifying to strike or hit, because if one counter is struck by the other, the game is won.

VI.—TOPS, &c.—THE DEVIL AMONG THE TAILORS.

The top was used in remote times by the Grecian boys. It is mentioned by Suidas, and called in Greek τροχος, and in Latin turbo. It was well known at Rome in the days of Virgil,[1] and with us as early at least as the fourteenth century, when its form was the same as it is now, and the manner of using it can admit of but little if any difference. Boys whipping of tops occur in the marginal paintings of the MSS. written at this period. It was probably in use long before.

In a manuscript at the Museum[2] I met with the following anecdote of prince Henry, the eldest son of James I., and the author assures us it is perfectly genuine;[2] his words are these: "The first tyme that he the prince went to the towne of Sterling to meete the king, seeing a little without the gate of the towne a stack of corne in proportion not unlike to a topp wherewith he used to play; he said to some that were with him, 'loe there is a goodly topp;' whereupon one of them saying, 'why doe you not play with it then?' he answered, 'set you it up for me and I will play with it.'"

We have hitherto been speaking of the whip-top; for the peg-top, I believe, must be ranked among the modern inventions, and probably originated from the te-totums and whirligigs, which seem all of them to have some reference to the tops, saving only that the usage of the te-totum may be considered as a kind of petty gambling, it being marked with a certain number of letters: and part of the stake is taken up, or an additional part put down, according as those letters lie uppermost. The author of Martin. Scriblerus mentions this toy in a whimsical manner: "He found that marbles taught him percussion, and whirligigs the axis in peretrochio." When I was a boy the te-totum had only four sides, each of them marked with a letter; a T for take all; an H for half, that is of the stake; an N for nothing; and a P for put down, that is, a stake equal

[1] The poet has drawn a simile from this pastime. Æneidos, lib. vii. lin. 378, et infra.

[2] Harl. Lib. No. 6391.

to that you put down at first. Toys of this kind are now made with many sides and letters.

There is a childish pastime which may well be inserted here, generally known by the ridiculous appellation of the Devil among the Tailors; it consists of nine small pins placed like skittles in the midst of a circular board, surrounded by a ledge with a small recess on one side, in which a peg-top is set up by means of a string drawn through a crevice in the recess; the top when loosed spins about among the pins and beats some, or all of them, down before its motion ceases; the players at this game spin the top alternately, and he who first beats down the pins to the number of one-and-thirty is the conqueror. This silly game, I am told, is frequently to be seen at low public houses, where many idle people resort and play at it for beer and trifling stakes of money.

VII.—EVEN OR ODD—CHUCK-HALFPENNY—DUCK AND DRAKE.

Even or Odd is another childish game of chance well known to the ancients, and called in Greek artiazein, Ἀρτιάζειν, and in Latin par vel impar. Hence the following line in Horace:

Ludere par, impar; equitare in arundine longâ.

To play at even or odd—to ride upon a long reed or cane.[1]

The play consists in one person concealing in his hand a number of any small pieces, and another calling even or odd at his pleasure; the pieces are then exposed, and the victory is decided by counting them; if they correspond with the call, the hider loses; if the contrary, of course he wins. The Grecian boys used beans, nuts, almonds, and money; in fact any thing that can be easily concealed in the hand will answer the purpose.

Cross and Pile is mentioned some pages back.[2] Here we may add Chuck-farthing, played by the boys at the commencement of the last century; it probably bore some analogy to pitch and hustle.[3] There is a letter in the Spectator supposed to be from the father of a romp, who, among other complaints of her conduct, says, "I catched her once at eleven years old at chuck-farthing among the boys."[4] I have seen a game thus denominated played with halfpence, every one of the compe-

[1] Lib. ii. sat. 3. line 48. [2] See p. 337. [3] See p. 276. [4] Vol. vi. No. 466.

titors having a like number, either two or four, and a hole being made in the ground with a mark at a given distance for the players to stand, they pitch their halfpence singly in succession towards the hole, and he whose halfpenny lies the nearest to it has the privilege of coming first to a second mark much nearer than the former, and all the halfpence are given to him; these he pitches in a mass towards the hole, and as many of them as remain therein are his due; if any fall short or jump out of it, the second player, that is, he whose halfpenny in pitching lay nearest to the first goer's, takes them and performs in like manner; he is followed by the others so long as any of the halfpence remain.

Duck and Drake, is a very silly pastime, though inferior to few in point of antiquity. It is called in Greek epostrakismos, Επoστρακισμος,[1] and was anciently played with flat shells, testulam marinam, which the boys threw into the water, and he whose shell rebounded most frequently from the surface before it finally sunk, was the conqueror. With us a part of a tile, a potsherd, or a flat stone, are often substituted for the shells.

To play at ducks and drakes is a proverbial expression for spending one's substance extravagantly. In the comedy called Green's Tu Quoque, one of the characters, speaking of a spendthrift, says, "he has thrown away as much in ducks and drakes as would have bought some five thousand capons."

VIII.—BASTE THE BEAR—HUNT THE SLIPPER, &c.

Baste, or buffet the bear with hammer and block, are rather appendages to other games than games by themselves, being punishments for failures, that ought to have been avoided; the first is nothing more than a boy couching down, who is laden with the clothes of his comrades and then buffeted by them; the latter takes place when two boys have offended, one of which kneeling down bends his body towards the ground, and he is called the block; the other is named the hammer, and taken up by four of his comrades, one at each arm and one at each leg, and struck against the block as many times as the play requires.

Hunt the Slipper.—In this pastime a number of boys and girls indiscriminately sit down upon the ground in a ring, with one of their companions standing on the outside; a slipper is

[1] Pollux, lib. ix. cap. 7.

then produced by those seated in the ring, and passed about from one to the other underneath their clothes as briskly as possible, so as to prevent the player without from knowing where it is; when he can find it, and detain it, the person in whose possession it was, at that time, must change place with him, and the play recommences.

Shuttle-cock has been spoken of in a former chapter, the engraving, No. 98,[1] affords an ancient representation of the game.

IX.—SPORTING WITH INSECTS—KITES—WINDMILLS

Spinning of chafers and of butterflies.—I do not know a greater fault in the nurture of children than the conniving at the wanton acts of barbarity which they practise at an early age upon innocent insects; the judgment of that parent must be exceedingly defective, or strangely perverted, who can proportion the degree of cruelty to the smallness of the creature that unfortunately becomes the sufferer. It is but a fly, perhaps he may say, when he sees his child pluck off its wings or its legs by way of amusement; it is but a fly, and cannot feel much pain; besides the infant would cry if I was to take it from him, and that might endanger his health, which surely is of more consequence than many flies: but I fear worse consequences are to be dreaded by permitting it to indulge so vicious an inclination, for as it grows up, the same cruelty will in all likelihood be extended to larger animals, and its heart by degrees made callous to every claim of tenderness and humanity.

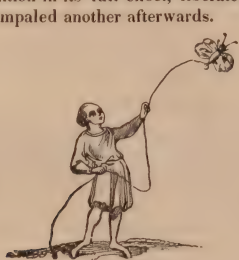
I have seen school-boys shooting of flies with a headless pin impelled through part of a tobacco-pipe, by the means of a bent cane, and this instrument is commonly called a fly-gun; from this they have proceeded to the truncating of frogs, and afterwards to tormenting of cats, with every other kind of animal they dare to attack; but I have neither time to recollect, nor inclination to relate, the various wanton acts of barbarism that have been practised, arising from the want of checking this pernicious inclination as soon as it begins to manifest in the minds of children.

The chafers, or May-flies, a kind of beetles found upon the bloom of hemlock in the months of May and June, are generally made the victims of youthful cruelty. These inoffensive

[1] See p. 303

insects are frequently caught in great quantities, crammed into small boxes without food, and carried in the pockets of school-boys to be taken out and tormented at their leisure, which is done in this manner; a crooked pin having two or three yards of thread attached to it, is thrust through the tail of the chafer, and on its being thrown into the air it naturally endeavours to fly away, but is readily drawn back by the boy, which occasions it to redouble its efforts to escape; these struggles are called spinning, and the more it makes of them, and the quicker the vibrations are, the more its young tormentor is delighted with his prize.

I am convinced that this cruelty, as well as many others above mentioned, arise from the perpetrators not being well aware of the consequences, nor conscious that the practice of them is exceedingly wicked. I hope the reader will excuse my introducing a story relating to myself; but as it may serve to elucidate the argument, I shall venture to give it. When a child, I was caught by my mother, who greatly abhorred every species of cruelty, in the act of spinning a chafer; I was so much delighted with the performance that I did not observe her coming into the room, but when she saw what I was about, without saying any thing previously to me, she caught me by the ear and pinched it so severely that I cried mercy; to the punishment she added this just reproof: "That insect has its feelings as you have! do you not see that the swift vibrations of its wings are occasioned by the torment it sustains? you have pierced its body without remorse, I have only pinched your ear, and yet you have cried out as if I had killed you." I felt the admonition in its full effect, liberated the poor May-fly, and never impaled another afterwards.



116. Boy and Butterfly.—XIV. Century.

The preceding representation is from a drawing on a manuscript in the Royal Library.[1]

This barbarous sport is exceedingly ancient. We find it mentioned by Aristophanes in his comedy of The Clouds.[2] It is called in the Greek melolonthe, Μηλολονθη, rendered in the Latin scarabœus, which seems to have been the name of the insect But the Grecian boys were less cruel in the operation than those of modern times, for they bound the thread about the legs of the beetle, instead of thrusting a pin through its tail. We are also told that the former frequently amused themselves in the same manner with little birds, substituted for the beetles.[3]

The Kite is a paper machine well known in the present day, which the boys fly into the air and retain by means of a long string. It probably received its denomination from having originally been made in the shape of the bird called a kite; in a short French and English Dictionary published by Miege, A. D. 1690, the words cerf volant, are said among other significations to denote a paper kite, and this is the first time I have found it mentioned. Now, the paper kites are not restricted to any particular form; they appear in a great diversity of figures, and not unfrequently in the similitude of men and boys. I have been told, that in China the flying of paper kites is a very ancient pastime, and practised much more generally by the children there than it is in England. From that country perhaps it was brought to us, but the time of its introduction is unknown to me; however, I do not find any reason to conclude that it existed here much more than a century back.

117. The Paper Windmill.

This is from a painting nearly five hundred years old; though differs very little in its form from those used by the children at present.

[1] No. 2. b. vii. [2] Act ii. scene the last. [3] Pollux, lib. ix. cap. 7.

X.—BOB-CHERRY.

This is "a play among children," says Johnson, "in which the cherry is hung so as to bob against the mouth," or rather so high as to oblige them to jump in order to catch it in their mouth, for which reason the candidate is often unsuccessful. Hence the point in the passage which Johnson quotes from Arbuthnot. "Bob-cherry teaches at once two noble virtues, patience and constancy; the first in adhering to the pursuit of one end, the latter in bearing a disappointment."

118. BOB-CHERRY.

In this engraving, taken from a MS. of the fourteenth century, in the Royal Library,[1] we see a sport of this kind where four persons are playing, but the object they are aiming at is much larger than a cherry, and was probably intended to represent an apple or an orange. "It was customary," we are told by Mr. Brand, "on the eve of All-Hallows, for the young people in the north to dive for apples, or catch at them when stuck at one end of a kind of hanging beam, at the other extremity of which is fixed a lighted candle, and that with their mouths, only having their hands tied behind their back."[2]

119. DIVING FOR APPLES.

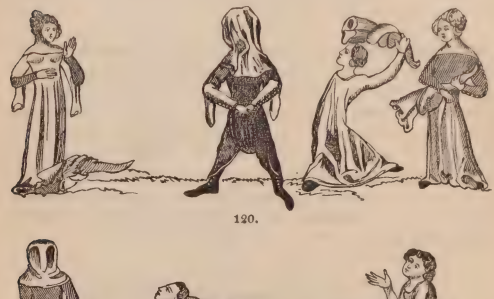
[1] No. 2, B. vii. [2] Addition to Bourne's Vulg. Antiq.

A pastime something resembling that of diving for the apples, I take it, is represented by the foregoing engraving from a MS. in the Bodleian Library,[1] and the business of the boy upon the form, with his head over the vessel of water, is to catch some object contained therein, or to avoid being ducked when the other end of the form is elevated by his companion.

XI.—HOODMAN BLIND—HOT COCKLES.

Hoodman Blind, more commonly called Blind Man's Buff, is where a player is blinded and buffeted by his comrades until he can catch one of them, which done, the person caught is blinded in his stead. This pastime was known to the Grecian youth, and called by them myia chalki, Μυια χαλκι.[2] It is called Hoodman's Blind because the players formerly were blinded with their hoods. In the Two angry Women of Abington, a comedy, this pastime is called the Christmas-sport of Hobman-Blind.

The manner in which Hoodman Blind was anciently performed with us appears from these three different representations, all of them from the Bodleian MS. before mentioned.



120.

121.

[1] No. 764. [2] Pollux. lib. ix. cap. 7.

122. Hoodman Blind.—XIV. Century.

The players who are blinded have their hoods reversed upon their heads for that purpose, and the hoods of their companions are separately bound in a knot to buffet them.

Hot Cockles, from the French hautes-coquilles, is a play in which one kneels, and covering his eyes lays his head in another's lap and guesses who struck him. Gay describes this pastime in the following lines:

> As at Hot Cockles once I laid me down,
> And felt the weighty hand of many a clown,
> Buxoma gave a gentle tap, and I
> Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye.

"The Chytrinda, χυτρινδα, of the Grecians," says Arbuthnot, "is certainly not our hot cockles, for that was by pinching, not by striking;" but the description of the chytrinda, as it is given by an ancient writer, bears little or no resemblance to the game of hot cockles, but is similar to another equally well known with us, and called frog in the middle. The chytrinda took place in this manner:—A single player, called χοτρα, kotra, and with us the frog, being seated upon the ground, was surrounded by his comrades, who pulled or buffeted him until he could catch one of them; which done, the person caught took his place, and was buffeted in like manner.[1] I scarcely need to add, that the frog in the middle, as it is played in the present day, does not admit of any material variation. There was another method of playing this game, according to the same author; but it bears no reference to either of those above described. The following engravings represent both the pastimes above mentioned, taken from the Bodleian manuscript of 1344 last referred to.

[1] Pollux, lib. ix. cap. 7.

123. Hot-Cockles.

124. Frog in the Middle.

XII.—COCK-FIGHTING.

I have already spoken at large upon cock-fighting, and throwing at cocks. I shall only observe that the latter, especially, was a very common pastime among the boys of this country till within these few years; and in the following engraving we have the copy of a curious delineation, which I take to represent a boyish triumph.

125 Cock-throwing Triumph.

The hero supposed to have won the cock, or whose cock escaped unhurt from the danger to which he had been exposed, is carried upon a long pole by two of his companions; he holds the bird in his hands, and is followed by a third comrade, who bears a flag emblazoned with a cudgel, the dreadful instrument used upon these occasions. The original painting occurs in the manuscript mentioned in the preceding article.

XIII.—ANONYMOUS PASTIMES—MOCK HONOURS AT BOARDING SCHOOLS.

The two next engravings are representations of a pastime, the name of which is unknown to me; but the purpose of it is readily discovered.

126.

In this, which is from the just cited Bodleian MS., we see a young man seated upon a round pole which may readily turn either way, and immediately beneath him is a vessel nearly filled with water; he holds a taper in each hand, and one of them is lighted, and his business, I presume, is to bring them both together and light the other, being careful at the same time not to lose his balance, for that done, he must inevitably fall into the water.

In the following, from a beautiful book of prayers in the possession of Francis Douce, esq. the task assigned to the youth is still more difficult, as well from the manner in which he is seated, as from the nature of the performance, which here he has completed: that is, to reach forward and light the taper held in his hands from that which is affixed to the end of the pole, and at a distance from him.

127.

The originals of both these engravings were made in the fourteenth century.

The subjoined engraving, also from a drawing in Mr. Douce's book of prayers, represents two boys seated upon a form by the side of a water-tub; both of them with their hands fixed below their knees, and one bending backwards in the same position, intending, I presume, to touch the water without immerging his head, or falling into it, and afterwards to recover his position.

128

This trick being done by the one was probably imitated by the other; I speak however from conjecture only. If it be necessary for him who stoops to take any thing out of the water, the pastime will bear some analogy to the diving for apples represented by the engraving No. 119, on a preceding page.[1]

In some great Boarding Schools for the fair sex, it is customary, upon the introduction of a novice, for the scholars to receive her with much pretended solemnity, and decorate a throne in which she is to be installed, in order to hear a set speech, addressed to her by one of the young ladies in the name of the rest. The throne is wide enough for three persons

[1] Page 391.

to sit conveniently, and is made with two stools, having a tub nearly filled with water between them, and the whole is covered by a counterpane or blanket, ornamented with ribands and other trifling fineries, and drawn very tightly over the two stools, upon each of which a lady is seated to keep the blanket from giving way when the new scholar takes her place; and these are called her maids of honour. The speech consists of high-flown compliments calculated to flatter the vanity of the stranger; and as soon as it is concluded, the maids of honour rising suddenly together, the counterpane of course gives way, and poor miss is unexpectedly immerged in the water.

XIV.—HOUSES OF CARDS—QUESTIONS AND COMMANDS—HANDY-DANDY—SNAP-DRAGON—PUSH-PIN—CRAMBO—LOTTERIES.

Building of houses *with cards*, and such like materials, is a very common amusement with children, as well as drawing little waggons, carts, and coaches; and sometimes boys will harness dogs and other animals, and put them to their waggons in imitation of horses. Something of this kind is alluded to by Horace, who writes thus in one of his satires:[1]

Ædificare cassus, plostello adjungere mures.
To build little houses, and join mice to the diminutive waggons.

Questions and Commands, a childish pastime, which though somewhat different in the modern modification, most probably derived its origin from the basiliuda, Βασιλινδα,[2] of the Greeks, in which we are told a king, elected by lot, commanded his comrades what they should perform.

Handy-dandy, "a play," says Johnson, "in which children change hands and places;" this seems clear enough according to the following quotation from Shakspeare: "See how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief! hark in thine ear; change places; and handy-dandy which is the justice and which is the thief;" to which is added another from Arbuthnot, "neither cross and pile, nor ducks and drakes, are quite so ancient as handy-dandy."

Snap-dragon. This sport is seldom exhibited but in winter, and chiefly at Christmas-time; it is simply heating of brandy or some other ardent spirit in a dish with raisins; when the brandy being set on fire, the young folks of both sexes standing round it pluck out the raisins, and eat them as hastily as they can, but rarely without burning their hands, or scalding their mouths.

[1] Lib ii. sat. 3. line 47.

[2] Pollux, lib. ix. cap. 7.

Push-pin is a very silly sport, being nothing more than simply pushing one pin across another.

Crambo is a diversion wherein one gives a word, to which another finds a rhyme; this, with other trifling amusements, is mentioned in a paper belonging to the Spectator.[1] "A little superior to these," that is, to persons engaged in cross-purposes, questions, and commands, "are those who can play at crambo, or cap-verses." In this we trace some vestige of a more ancient pastime, much in vogue in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, called the A B C of Aristotle; which is strongly recommended by the author, one "Mayster Bennet," not only to children, but also to persons of man's estate, if ignorant of letters. The proem to this curious alliterative alphabet is to the following effect:

"Whoever will be wise and command respect let him learn his letters, and look upon the A B C of Aristotle, against which no argument will hold good: It is proper to be known by clerks and knights, and may serve to amend a mean man, for often the learning of letters may save his life. No good man will take offence at the amendment of evil, therefore let every one read this arrangement and govern himself thereby.

Hearkyn and heare every man and child how that I begynne.

A to amerous, to adventurous; ne anger the too much.
B to bold, to busy, and board thou not too brode.
C to curtes, to cruel, and care not too sore.
D to dull, to dreadfull, and drynk thou not too oft.
E to ellynge, to excellent; ne to ernestfull neyther.
F to fierce, ne too familier but frendely of chere.
G to glad, to gloryous, and gealosy thou shalt hate
H to hasty, to hardy, ne too hevy yn thyne herte.
I to jettyng, to jangling, and jape not too oft.
K to keeping, to kynd, and ware knaves taches among.
L to lothe, to lovyng, to lyberall of goods.
M to medlurs, to merry but as manner asketh.
N to noyous, to nyce, ne nought to newe fangle.
O to orpyd, to oveyrthwarte, and othes do thee hate.
P to preysyng, to prevy, ne peerless with prynces.
Q to queynt, to querelous, but quyene wele thee may.
R to ryetous, to revelyng, ne rage not too moche.
S to strange, ne to stervyng, nor stare not too brode.
T to taylours, ne tayle wyse, for temperance yt hatyth.
V to venemous, to violent, and waste not too mych.
W to wyld, ne wrathful, and ne too wyse deeme thee.

For fear of a fall.

A measurable meane way is best for us all. Explicit."

[1] Vol. viii. No. 504.

There are two copies of this alphabet among the Harleian manuscripts, one marked 1706, written in the fourteenth century, and another marked 541; whence the above is chiefly taken. At the end of the former we read "XY wyth ESED AND per se—Amen."

Lotteries, in which toys and other trifling prizes were included to be drawn for by children, were in fashion formerly, but by degrees, and especially since the establishment of the State Lottery, they have been magnified into a dangerous species of gambling, and are very properly suppressed by the legislature. They were in imitation of the State Lotteries, with prizes of money proportionable to the value of the tickets, and drawn in like manner. These lotteries are called little goes.

XV.—OBSOLETE PASTIMES.

I have here attempted to give some account of the principal sports practised by the children of this country. I am fully sensible that the list will admit of very many additions, and also that the pastimes which are included in it have been subject to numberless variations. I have, however, set down all that I can recollect, and described them according to the manner in which I have seen the larger part of them performed. It only remains for me to enumerate a few more, which indeed are not well known to me, but may be elucidated hereafter by some more able writer.

129.

This engraving represents a kind of a mock procession, where one of the company, equipped in a royal habit with a crown upon his head, is walking with his mantle displayed by two attendants, and preceded by a zany beating a t ambourin with

knotted thong. I presume it to be the installation of the King of the Bean, who has already been introduced to the reader.

Below it are two figures, one of them blinded with his hood, having a club upon his shoulder, and approaching towards an iron cauldron, in order no doubt to strike it with his club.

130.

This may probably refer to the amusement at wakes and fairs, where various tasks for pastime sake are frequently assigned to blindfolded persons, as the Wheelbarrow Race, described on a preceding page.[1] The drawings from whence the two last engravings are derived, are in the Bodleian MS. of 1344 already mentioned.

The sport in the next representation is quite unknown to me, unless it may be thought to bear some resemblance to the Greek game called apodidraskinda, Αποδιδρασκινδα,[2] where one being seated in the midst of his comrades, closed his eyes, or was blinded by the hand of another, while the rest concealed themselves, and he who was found by him after he was permitted to rise, took his place; this was evidently a species of the pastime called hide and seek. The original of this engraving is in a MS. of the thirteenth century, in the Roya Library.[3]

131.

[1] Page 371.

[2] Pollux, lib. ix. cap. 7.

[3] No. 20. D. iv.

I am equally at a loss respecting the two next representations

133.

Those that are standing, and those that are seated below them, are evidently engaged in a similar kind of pastime. The only game within the compass of my knowledge that bears any resemblance to it, I have seen played by two persons one o. them alternately holds up the fingers of his right hand, varying the number at his pleasure, and the other is obliged to answer promptly by exposing a like number of his fingers, which is called by both, and the least variation on either side loses. In these delineations there are three players, and he in the middle seems to be alternately answering to the other two. They are in the Bodleian MS. of 1344.

Mr. Douce's Book of Prayers of the fourteenth century contains the following representation.

134.

Here we see a rope apparently made fast at both ends, and a man laying hold of it with his teeth, by which he seems to support himself. If this be the meaning of the delineator, the trick may properly be classed with those that were exhibited by the minstrels and the joculators.

135.

136.

With respect to the two preceding drawings from the frequently mentioned MS. of 1344, in the Bodleian Library, I can

hardly venture a conjecture; unless we may suppose them to represent two of the ridiculous ceremonies belonging to the Festival of Fools. I suspect the monks with the nuns in No. 135, are lay people who have assumed the religious habits, for the former have not the tonsure, but their hair is powdered with blue.

XVI.—CREAG—QUEKE-BOARD—HAND IN AND HAND OUT—WHITE AND BLACK, AND MAKING AND MARRING—FIGGUM—MOSEL THE PEG—HOLE ABOUT THE CHURCHYARD—PENNY-PRICK. PICK-POINT, &c.—MOTTOES, SIMILES, AND CROSS-PURPOSES—THE PARSON HAS LOST HIS CLOAK.

Creag is a game mentioned in a computus dated the twenty-eighth of Edward I., A. D. 1300, and said to have been played by his son prince Edward.

Queke Borde, with *Hand yn and Hand oute*, are spoken of as new games, and forbidden by a statute made in the seventeenth year of Edward IV.

White and Black, and also *Making and Marring* are prohibited by a public act established in the second and third years of Philip and Mary.

Figgum is said to be a juggler's game in the comedy of Bartholomew Fayre by Ben Jonson, acted in 1614; to which is added, "the devil is the author of wicked Figgum." In the same play mention is made of crambe (probably crambo), said to be "another of the devil's games."

Mosel the Pegge, and playing for the hole about the church yard, are spoken of as boys' games, in a comedy called The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art, written in the reign of queen Elizabeth.

Penny-pricke appears to have been a common game in the fifteenth century, and is reproved by a religious writer of that period.[1]

Pick-point, *Venter-point*, *Blow-point*,[2] and *Gregory*, occur in a description of the children's games in the sixteenth century. Blow-point was probably blowing an arrow through a trunk at certain numbers by way of lottery. To these may be added another pastime, called *Drawing Dun out of the Mire*. Chaucer probably alludes to this pastime in the Manciple's Prologue,

[1] Harl. MS. 2391. [2] Harl. MS. 2125.

where the host seeing the cook asleep, exclaims, "Syr, what dunne is in the mire."

Mottoes, Similes, and *Cross Purposes,* are placed among the childrens' games in a paper belonging to the Spectator.[1] And the *Parson has lost his cloak,* in another, where a supposed correspondent writes thus: "I desire to know if the merry game of the parson has lost his cloak is not much in vogue amongst the ladies this Christmas, because I see they wear hoods of all colours, which I suppose is for that purpose."[2]

[1] Vol. iii. No. 24[illegible].

[2] Vol. iv. No. 278.

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THE END.

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